



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





.

.

.

.



Faint handwritten text, possibly "Faint" and "at C".

H. Kinsey
Petrovitch

THE
FEUDS
OF
LUNA & PEROLLO ;

30
OR, THE
FORTUNES
OF THE

HOUSE OF PANDOLFINA.

AN HISTORIC ROMANCE, OF THE SIXTEENTH
CENTURY

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

Who set this ancient quarrel new abroad?
Speak, nephew, were you by when it began!

SHAKESPEARE.

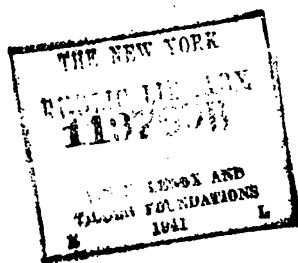
VOL. II.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR

A. K. NEWMAN AND Co. LEADENHALL-ST

1847.



THE
FEUDS
OF
LUNA AND PEROLLO.

CHAPTER I.

————— The high emprise,
That bade him forth to knighthood's fearless eyes,
Seem'd desperate in the days of Charlemagne;
But, in our times, nor glory, love, nor gain,
Would youthful knight allure to seek such perilous prize.

OBERON.

THE impatience of Gaetano to begin his voyage was such, that he resolved to depart the instant the bark was in readiness; and amidst the regrets and good wishes of his friends, left Sciaacca during the night which succeeded the festival.

Don Giacomo had provided him with a swift-sailing vessel, and every thing which could, in any probability, contribute to the success of his expedition. Federico and don Paulo accompanied him to the beach, and the former deeply regretted that he was not permitted to partake in the enterprise.

On the second day after the departure of Pignatelli, another dispatch arrived from Trapani, and by his desire it was opened by Federico. It brought the information that the cavalier Landolini was recovering from his illness, and hoped immediately to obtain leave to seek his young friend in Sciacca, and deliberate with him on some further steps for the recovery of his lost daughter, or at least to endeavour to ascertain her fate.

In the mean time, with a favourable wind, and buoyant hopes of success, Gaetano pursued his course to Tunis, which he reached in safety, after a remarkably short and easy voyage. The usual *douceur* to the officers of the port in-

.

duced them to connive at the arrival of a small vessel, the master of which gave out that he came on some commercial business with a Jewish merchant, who traded largely with many European ports.

Under this pretext, Gaetano was hospitably received by Ben Musa the Jew, who was a confidential agent of several European governments, and particularly indebted to Perollo. Pignatelli made known to his host, without delay, the object of his voyage—to search for, and redeem at any expence, a young female who had been carried off from the coast of Sicily. The Jew undertook to make every inquiry, and to use his most strenuous endeavours to accomplish the object he desired; which his extensive connexions, general interest, and acquaintance, would enable him to do. If the lady was in Tunis, he assured Pignatelli he should be informed of it; but at the same time said, that if she had been already disposed of to any of the principal

Tunisians, all hopes of redeeming her would be vain. It would, he added, take a day or two to make the necessary inquiries, and in the interim he begged his guest would excite no curiosity or suspicion, by his personal interference or questions, but conduct himself on all occasions in a manner suitable with his assumed character of a mercantile agent. The character was rather a novel one to him, but Pignatelli promised to do his best to support it.

During his voyage, and until he had taken these first steps to forward the point in view, Gaetano had been too much occupied in considering every probable event which might occur, and preparing himself for it; but he had now put the affair into the best train he could, and began to turn his attention to the novelties of the situation in which he was placed. His host was hospitable and kind, and seemed to enter warmly into his wishes; there was however an air of caution about him, acquired from the precarious state in which

was kept by the circumstances of the country : his family consisted of his wife, two daughters, and a son. Even from home, he desired that Gaetano's real rank, on the occasion of his voyage, might be concealed ; and they regarded him at first with little interest, considering him merely a mercantile person, similar to many others who were daily in habits of intercourse with Musa : but all the care of Pignatelli could not repress his natural manners ; his admiration of the fair Raimonda and her sister shewed itself in numberless attentions, which soon excited their anger, and the alarm of their father : they were dismissed to their rooms, and the Jew cautioned Pignatelli to be more careful in concealing his politeness : he promised obedience, and his host went on the business with which he was commissioned, when a new dilemma occurred. Three or four merchants came in, who had heard of the arrival of some stranger at the house of Musa : his son,

who had been desired to remain with the guest, received them, but their object was to hear the news from abroad, and Pignatelli was inundated with questions as to the rate of exchange in Genoa, Pisa, and Venice. He was aghast at being questioned on a subject so remote from his knowledge, stammered, hesitated, and was unable to utter a word.

“A prudent discreet young man,” observed one of the visitors; “he has been ordered by his employers to give no information; something worth knowing must be in agitation.”

They then varied their mode of attack, and demanded the prices which various articles of merchandize produced in different ports. Gaetano thought here he might venture on a guess to answer them; but unfortunately his statements were such as called forth the utmost astonishment; and again he found he was wrong.

“Barilla risen so, within these six weeks!” exclaimed one of them; “it will

enrich my cousin Benjamin prodigiously : follow me, young man, to his house, and you shall be well rewarded."

" I should be most happy," replied Gaetano, " to be the messenger of such good tidings ; but my statement was only from report, and may be incorrect ; at all events, I cannot leave the house until my friend returns."

" And saltpetre?" asked another ; " how is saltpetre in the European markets?"

Fortunately Musa unexpectedly returned, before Pignatelli had again involved himself ; and his host finding he was under some confusion, requested him to retire into another room, to inspect some accounts he had prepared for him. Gladly he accepted this excuse to escape, and left the Jew to discuss with his brethren the extraordinary intelligence brought by the young agent, whom Musa again cautioned, when he had dismissed these unwelcome visitants, to avoid, as much

as possible, entering into any conversation which might betray him.

"It was entirely involuntary on my part, I assure you," said Gaetano; "I was equally unable either to escape from the questions, or to answer them."

The Jew was however so disturbed at the idea of the conversation which might be excited by the wonderful account which had been given, and which no endeavours on his part could induce his brethren either to conceal or to disbelieve, that he determined not to expose Gaetano to such difficulties in future, but to remain with him as much as possible, and to prevent any one from seeing him, during the time that the affair required his own absence from home.

When the family again assembled, Pignatelli endeavoured to remember his lesson; and acquitted himself, as he thought, with the most becoming rudeness and indifference, but could scarcely restrain the wonder and amusement he derived from

the manners and customs of his new acquaintance. The dresses of the females consisted of the richest velvets, covered with heavy gold embroidery; they were at once magnificent and elegant: in their ears they wore (as is common with the African Jewesses) earrings of enormous size, eight and ten inches in circumference, and so weighty, from the jewels attached to them, that they are obliged to be supported by fastening them to the head-dresses, as well as to the ears, in which large holes are made for them, and kept open by wearing in them date-stones. The ladies still seemed to remember the first civilities they had received, and were only restrained by the presence of their father from demonstrating the satisfaction they had afforded.

To prevent as much as possible any conversation which might betray his guest, Ben Musa endeavoured to keep as far as possible from such topics as had already exposed his ignorance, and inquired into the public affairs of Europe.

Pignatelli was at first as guarded as could be wished; but after a while becoming more forgetful, he launched into ardent and enthusiastic approbation of the masterly manœuvres of the Imperial generals; and with all the ardour of a young soldier, descanted on the military transactions which had lately occurred. For some time his host endeavoured to restrain him by signs and gestures, but these were all unheeded; and after suffering the torrent to continue for some time, and finding that the observation of all the party was excited, he bluntly said, the subject tired him.

Gaetano, now aware of what he had done, instantly desisted; but the wonder of the family was increased, and all were convinced that the stranger was not what he wished to be thought: this produced farther remonstrances from the Jew, and additional promises from Gaetano of being more guarded in future.

On the day following, Musa yielded to the wishes of his guest, and conducted

him through the principal parts of the city, in which there are few objects worthy notice. It is situated on the western side of a large landlocked bay, or rather lake, in which rises a lofty eminence, forming the boldest feature in the scene; on this stood the principal buildings of ancient Carthage, every vestige of which time has now swept away, and the famed daughter of Tyre is, like her great progenitor, no longer to be traced, but by a few solitary masses of undistinguished ruin. The principal mosque and the palace of the bey are the only buildings of consequence in the modern town; and except these, the novelty of the scene was its only attraction; the curiosity of Gaetano was soon satisfied, and they were returning to the residence of Ben Musa, when a Tunisian, apparently of some rank, accosted them. *

"Your young friend, Musa," he said, "has, I hear, brought intelligence of Benjamin's good fortune."

"Some of our merchants have chosen to raise such a report," said Musa.

"And is it not true?" asked the Tunisian, looking at Gaetano, in whose air he observed something so much above the usual rank of Musa's associates, that he fixed his eyes upon him with uncommon earnestness.

The Jew observed it, and anxiously wished to escape; but fearful of betraying his uneasiness, only quickened his pace, and talked loudly, and with great rapidity, of the common affairs of the city.

At length they succeeded in getting quit of their companion; and Musa, no longer able to endure this constant alarm, implored Pignatelli to withdraw from the city to a country-house he possessed at Manuba, about four miles from Tunis: thither he promised to convey to him any intelligence he could collect respecting the object of his mission, and assured him, that from the inquiries he had already set on foot, he should be enabled to inform

him of all the captives who had been brought to Tunis since the time of Marguerita's disappearance:

Pignatelli, willing to gratify his host, consented to the plan, and in company with young Musa, departed in a few hours for Manuba. The house was situated in a small plain, embosomed in groves and gardens, nearly adjoining the ancient aqueduct which supplied Carthage with water, and in the immediate vicinity of several country-houses of the principal Tunisians.

They arrived in the evening, and at an early hour separated for the night. The room in which Gaetano was placed communicated with a terrace in the garden by a flight of steps from his window. The evening was fine and clear; he had left his companion for the sake of being relieved from the restraint of his presence, rather than from fatigue, and felt little disposition to go to rest; he therefore opened his window, and descended to the terrace below. The dew, which was be-

ginning to fall, refreshed the plants around him, and they sent forth on every side the most delicious perfume. The moonlight glimmered through the walks of orange and citron trees, and tempted him to wander through their shadowy arcades; he was meditating on his friends in Sicily, on Landolini, on Federico, and on Costanza di Solanto, when a distant sound of music aroused him, and the notes of a well-known Sicilian air floated on the gentle breeze of evening. Pleasure and astonishment fixed him for a few moments to the spot. Who could the musician be who had awakened these notes, so singularly adapted to catch his attention? Young Musa was ignorant of every thing connected with him, and had betrayed no taste which could induce him to suppose that the sounds proceeded from him. At all events he was resolved, if possible, to ascertain from whence they came, and advanced with rapidity down a path which led in the direction from which he seemed to hear them; his progress was arrested.

by arriving at the foot of the aqueduct, the wall of which was the boundary of the garden in that direction; the music had ceased, and he waited to hear it resumed; but he waited in vain, and, considerably disappointed, he returned towards his apartment; he had hardly reached the terrace, when another air, familiar to his ears, was breathed from a Sicilian pipe. Once more he tried to follow the direction from whence it proceeded, till he was stopped by a lofty hedge of myrtle and mastic bushes; the sounds now seemed at no great distance; the musician paused for an instant, and was beginning again, when Gaetano commenced singing the words to the air he had just heard; the sounds then ceased altogether, and when he had concluded, he listened in eager hope of a reply. A slight rustling was heard amongst the bushes, and a voice on the other side demanded, what unfortunate fellow-captive was so near?"

"No captive," replied Gaetano, "but

one who possesses the inclination, and perhaps the means of rescuing the unfortunate."

"Where are you?" inquired the stranger.

"In the gardens of Ben Musa the Jew."

"It is too late for me to be absent much longer," said the voice again; "can you meet me an hour earlier to-morrow evening by the wall of the aqueduct?"

"Certainly," replied Pignatelli; "who and what are you?"

"A Sicilian by birth, and a slave by fortune; but be silent, some one is approaching, and do not disappoint me to-morrow."

The speaker then began loudly to sound his pipe, and was soon interrupted by another person, with whom he entered into conversation; and Pignatelli waiting till he heard their voices fade away in the distance, returned to his chamber, resolving to see the unknown person the next evening, and to render him any aid in his

power. His feelings were at the time more than commonly susceptible; the music, and the circumstances under which he heard it, had excited in him a lively interest, and he ardently desired to rescue his countryman from captivity.

On the following day, Ben Musa came down to Manuba, and informed Pignatelli, that he had received intelligence from several persons who were concerned in the disposal of captives, of all that had been brought to Tunis within the time to which his inquiries reached; one however seemed most particularly to correspond with the circumstances of the signora Landolini. A young girl had been brought nearly about the time from some part of the Italian coast, and almost instantly disposed of, notwithstanding the ill health into which she was thrown by her capture. She was now, it was stated, in the possession of one of the agas of the court, who had given a considerable sum for her. The name of this lady Musa could

not learn, but he expected further intelligence upon the subject.

“The person who has purchased her,” he said, “resides in a neighbouring palace; but if this is the lady you seek, signor, I fear all hopes of redeeming her will be in vain.”

“Can no means be devised of conveying her away?”

“Impossible,” said the Jew; “the attempt would involve all concerned in it in certain ruin, and could not succeed.”

Pignatelli had seen too much of the cautious character of his host, to entertain an idea of persuading him to run any hazard in forwarding his wishes; and he resolved to conceal his designs, and trust to his own exertions, and any aid he could procure from other quarters. Pandolfina had given him an unlimited credit on the Jew, and desired him to spare no expence in bribes to any person to whom it was necessary; he hoped therefore that if he could ascertain that Marguerita was in the

hands of the aga, he might, by the means placed in his reach, gain over some of his domestics to assist in conveying her privately on board his bark, and escaping with her to Sicily. He inquired the name of the aga, and having learned it, made no further comment, but begged his agent to follow up his inquiries with unabated zeal, and to lose no means of obtaining information; which Musa promised, and leaving Gaetano still with his son, returned in the evening to Tunis.

After his departure, Pignatelli asked his companion to accompany him round the gardens, and inquired occasionally the names of the adjoining proprietors, amongst whom he learned was the aga Solyman, whose domains joined upon that part of Ben Musa's ground, in which he had on the previous evening held the conversation with the Sicilian stranger.

Gaetano concealed his satisfaction, and, as early as he could without suspicion, withdrew to his chamber, where he awaited the hour of his appointed interview,

and heard, with no little joy, the commencement of the same strains which before attracted his attention; and tending instantly to the spot, he found a stranger no less anxiously expecting coming. After exchanging a few words he told Gaetano, that if every thing were secure on his side, from interruption, he would find the means of joining him in a short time; and being assured that there was no danger of discovery, he soon took his way through the ruins of the aqueduct into the garden, and descended to the place where Pignatelli awaited him, who found his new acquaintance a young man of prepossessing appearance, clothed in the habit of a slave.

Gaetano informed him that he was a Christian and fellow-countryman, and was a visitor for a short time with Musa the Jew, and proffered his services in any way that might be of use.

The young man expressed his gratitude at so fortunate an encounter, and told him that he was a Sicilian of respect

parentage, who had been captured by the Tunisians in a voyage from Sicily to Malta and sold as a slave to the aga. Served by whom he was employed in his gardens and having acquired the favour of his superior, he was permitted to enjoy rather more liberty than his fellow-slaves, and lived with the principal manager of his master's lands, who frequently permitted him to ramble in the gardens till a late hour in the evening, when he solaced himself with the music of his native land; for no great sum he thought he might obtain his liberty, and upon his arrival in Sicily, his friends would thankfully repay the kindness which had set him free.

Gaetano inquired if the aga had other Sicilian slaves.

Ludovico, which was the name of the young man, said he believed not, but he knew little of the interior of the palace and its inhabitants; he had however heard from the wife of the man with whom he dwelt, and who was frequently employed in the harem, of some young Italian

who had been brought to Manuba within a few months; that her appearance was peculiarly interesting, but she seemed sinking into an untimely grave from sorrow. The aga, he added, was deeply enamoured of her beauty, and lamented her illness, which was, he understood, daily and rapidly increasing.

“Would it be possible,” asked Gaetano, “by bribing this woman, to communicate to the lady, that a friend, deeply interested in her welfare, was at hand, to redeem her either openly by purchase, or to venture his life to procure her escape? Effect this,” he continued, “and I will answer without hesitation for your own deliverance.”

Ludovico considered for a few moments, and then replied, that his own exertions should be employed to the utmost, and that he believed old Cadige, the woman he had mentioned, was avaricious enough to be tempted to any thing by a liberal bride; and the keys of the garden being in her husband's power, she might enable them to effect their purpose.

On the following night, he promised to meet Gaetano again, and inform him of any intelligence he had been able to gain. They soon after separated, and Pignatelli returned to his chamber. The next day passed without any incident, Musa not coming down to Manuba; but as our adventurer had, he hoped, placed the affair in a proper train, he felt less anxious about the measures to be taken by the Jew. He was not indeed positively certain that the lady in the harem of Solyman was Marguerita Landolini, but he had strong evidence of its being so; the time at which she was brought to Tunis corresponded with that at which the daughter of his friend was carried off, and no other person had yet been heard of by Musa, who at all answered the description. The more he reflected on the subject, the more fully he was convinced he was right; and that if disappointed here, he had no hopes of success in any other quarter. The intelligence brought him by Ludovico at their

next meeting still further convinced him. The honesty of Cadige had yielded to the hopes of gain, and she readily engaged, for a stipulated price, to introduce Ludovico and his friend into the private garden, put the lady into their hands, and procure disguises in which she and Ludovico might reach Tunis, where Gaetano could convey them privately on board, and set sail for Sicily without delay. The lady, she said, was an Italian, exceedingly young and beautiful, but sinking rapidly beneath her mental sufferings; and unceasingly lamenting for her father and her friends, there could be no doubt of her readiness to escape, for which the old woman undertook to prepare her, the first opportunity she could find during the day. Gaetano parted from his new acquaintance in great glee, engaging to have the bark in readiness to sail the moment they could reach Tunis, and to prepare on the ensuing night for the rescue of the lady.

When Musa came again to visit his guest, he brought no further news of any importance; the only female he could hear of, at all likely to be the one of whom Gaetano was in search, was the lady who was in the harem of aga Solymán, and all hopes to redeem her were useless, even if death had not already set her free, of which there appeared great prospect.

Gaetano affected to acquiesce in the opinion of the Jew, but requested him to furnish him with a sum of money immediately, and to attend him on the morrow, as he should like at least to make the attempt to deliver the lady, by offering her ransom; but that if it failed, he should set sail for Sicily; and as he observed sailors might be dilatory, he would order them to prepare instantly for their departure; desiring Musa, on his return to Sicily, to send one of the mariners to him with the money he required. His wishes were punctually obeyed; the caution of his host was lulled to sleep, and Pignatelli

prepared for the execution of his plan ordering the sailor who brought the sun he desired, to take care that all on board would be in readiness to depart at a moment's notice.

Ludovico was punctual to his appointment, and told his companion that Cadig was to be in readiness in a short time to admit them to the garden, that she had been some hours in the palace, and assured him she should find no difficulty in communicating to the lady the good fortune which awaited her; but before she put her into their hands, should require the payment of the sum she had specified and for which she thus adventured her life. When they had escaped from the gardens the lady was to set out with Ludovico disguised as peasants, with such fruits as are usually carried to the markets in Tunis. They were to arrive as soon as the city gates should be opened, and repair without loss of time to the port, where Pignatelli's bark was in waiting.

Gaetano found no difficulty in ascend

ing the appearance of the lady, and
 opinion the description of her features
 the picture of a woman. The lady was
 seated in the arm of a chair, and was
 some distance from the wall, and the
 walls, and the ceiling, and the floor,
 which was all covered with a
 carpet of a rich red velvet, and
 under the direction of the lady, and
 and entrance. The lady, however,
 near the door, in expectation of the signal,
 and she waited until the door was
 the door slowly unlocked, and a female
 figure stood in the opening. Pignatelli
 advanced, followed by Landovico, and they
 entered the garden. "Adieu," said the
 lady, "is all said."

"Give me my reward," she replied.

Pignatelli placed the purse in her hands,
 which she quietly concealed about her
 person, and then said—"I am obliged to
 you, signor, and to my friend Landovico,
 but lament that I can be of no further
 use; the lady expired an hour ago."

The surprise and mortification of Gaetano for an instant overpowered him.

“This is a forged tale,” he said, “and invented to deceive us; but nothing shall induce me to return till I have fuller conviction.”

The woman quietly placed the key in her bosom, having previously locked the gate.—“My life,” she said, “shall not be hazarded; and unless you swear instantly to retire, I will alarm the palace guards, and give you up to certain destruction.”

Ludovico, who was standing behind Gaetano, loosened his cloak, and suddenly throwing it over the head of Cadige, prevented her uttering any sound, and snatching the key from her bosom, inquired how they should proceed?

“Let us first,” said Pignatelli, “secure this most faithful ally, and then endeavour to ascertain the truth of her statement.”

They conducted her to a remote part of the outer garden, and interrogated her about her story, in which she firmly per-

her directions, mounted the tree, from whence he was too fully convinced of the melancholy truth. In the apartment before him, he perceived the inanimate form of a young female stretched lifeless upon a couch, and two mutes stationed beside her. As he leaned forward to gain, if possible, a clearer view, the branch on which he rested gave way, and he fell with some violence to the ground, but arose unhurt. Ludovico, who saw the accident, rushed forward to aid him, forgetful of his charge; and Cadige, taking advantage of his negligence, fled to a neighbouring door of the harem, rending the air with screams and cries.

“This treacherous fool will be our ruin,” said Ludovico.

“We have no longer any cause for exposing ourselves,” said Gaetano; “follow me.”

They then retreated with all possible speed towards the gate, but missing the direct pathway, entangled themselves in the mazes of the garden. Lights moving

in all directions. I am almost certain
convinced that the man was
alarmed. And then, after a moment's
When they were in the room, the
satelli asked me concerning it. I said:

"Surely, master. I saw it in the
last we entered."

"I had it not," said the master. "So
perfectly reckless your reasoning is. Sus-
picion of the truth of the new acquaintance
for a moment entered the master's mind. But the
evident alarm under which he suffered
convinced him of his truth. "It is un-
doubtedly concealed about your person,"
he said.

Ludovico, now nearly beside himself
with fright, trembled so violently, that he
could scarcely make the necessary search,
which however proved successful. He
had in his agitation forgotten where he
had put it; and but for the greater com-
posure of his companion, which never des-
serted him for an instant, they must have
fallen into the hands of their pursuers.
As it was, they fled through the opening,

just as some one appeared in the distance and discharged a carbine at them in their retreat. The windings of the extensive gardens were well known to Ludovico; they outstripped their pursuers, reached the ruined aqueduct, and gained the grounds of Ben Musa in safety.

Gaetano took Ludovico with him to his chamber, and they consulted together how to proceed. It was probable that Cadogan would invent some story of her terror which would by no means involve her, and perhaps not Gaetano; the safety of Ludovico was more doubtful, and Pignatelli determined to rescue him at all events; but the difficulty at first seemed very great. In the habit he then wore he was exposed to certain detection; his master missing him in the morning, would make inquiries which must lead to an instant search; to trust Ben Musa, would be to betray to him the whole proceedings and would waste time, as the sooner they were on board the better.

After some consideration, Pignatelli

THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL
 ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL

ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL
 ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL

ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL
 ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL

ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL
 ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL

ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL
 ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL

ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL
 ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL

ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL
 ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL

ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL
 ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL

ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL
 ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL

ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL
 ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL

ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL
 ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL

ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL
 ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL

ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL
 ONE, AND THE FOUNTAIN WAS A WONDERFUL

the breezes which wafted him so rapidly along, had delayed the fatal intelligence of which he was the unwilling heir. But soon they doubled Cape St. Marco bore down towards Sciacca, with a celerity which, under any other circumstances Pignatelli would have considered a height of good fortune.

CHAPTER II.

————— It doth present harsh rage,
 Defect of manners, want of government,
 Pride, haughtiness, opinion, and disdain ;
 The least of which haunting a nobleman,
 Loseth mens hearts, and leaves behind a stain.

SHAKESPEARE.

THE news of a vessel bearing up towards the city, was, four or five days after Gaetano's departure, conveyed to don Sigismund, who instantly ordered that the baroness Solanto should not be disturbed by the intelligence, until some more certain information was obtained : a second messenger came, confirming the news, but at present ignorant of the nation to which she belonged. The count immediately repaired to the gallery in which was situated the apartments of the baroness and her daughter ; and having summoned her attendant, desired that the lady

Costanza might be requested to see him instantly. Anticipating the purport of his visit, a few minutes brought her to his presence.

“ I wish not,” said Sigismund, “ to cause hopes, signora, which may hereafter be disappointed ; but a vessel, I am told, is now bearing into the bay ; probably it may bring the baron Solanto, and such, most devoutly do I hope, we may find to be the case ; but until we are assured of the fact, it will, I think, be better not to agitate the feelings of the baroness. I will myself repair to the Marino, and bring you the earliest intelligence.”

Costanza expressed her joy and gratitude, and agreed with the count in the precaution he advised, entreating him not to delay an instant in relieving her from the agony of suspense. Impatient to bring her the glad tidings, Sigismund lingered not a moment, but hurried to the Marino, to watch the progress of the approaching sail, which yet was at some little distance.

From one of the towers of Perollo Castle, Federico was also watching the coming bark.

"She appears a vessel of some force," said one of his father's officers who was with him; "and Turkish, I should think by her make."

Federico began to fear that disappointment was still in store for those in whom he felt so interested; since their meeting in the church, his thoughts had been occupied by one idea alone. The image of Costanzo di Solanto filled his mind, and her destiny had been the only subject of his reflections. In the imperious and haughty manner of Sigismund di Luna, he read the tyranny to which her spirit would be bowed; and in the malignant scowl of the countess, he had traced those dark passions to which he feared Costanza's peace would for ever be sacrificed. Had any accident happened to her father, he felt there were no hopes of her escape, as her mother's weak state rendered it impossible she could bear up against any

shock of grief; and left an orphan in the hands of Luna and his mother, the fulfilment of her engagements must be inevitable; but should these fears for the safety of Solanto be groundless, his arrival, it might be hoped, would change the situation of affairs. How far he might be pledged to Luna, Federico knew not; but he trusted that some fortunate event might shew in their true colours the dangerous risks to which the happiness of any female must be exposed, who was left to the violence of Sigismund and the fury of the countess.

Without violating the promise he had given to his mother, Perollo could not but indulge in these delusive visions. Costanza's appearance at the festival, and the spirit with which she had resisted the assumed authority, and the rudeness and ill-humour to which she was exposed, had served to increase his growing passion for her. All the resolutions he had formed, after the conversation with his mother, had faded before the impressions which

the interview in the church had brought back ; and though no event had occurred to raise his hopes, though the air and manner of don Sigismund convinced him that Costanza was considered some pious bride, yet, against all reason, he still felt ~~him~~ overwhelmed with despondency that he had done since first he learned the true truth of Sigismund's engagement with the object of his new and ardent love. His anxiety for the arrival of the baron had now another motive, by enabling the baron to remove from the Castel di Luna, he trusted the intercourse with his mother would be more frequent, and that he himself should thus be enabled to visit, and avail himself of any advantage which fortunate circumstances might offer.

In the temper and manner of don Sigismund, and the character which the countess universally bore, he flattered himself he had sufficient excuse for desiring to rescue Costanza from their alliance. Soothing and encouraging him-

self with every favourable point, and carefully excluding from his thoughts every argument which reason could not but adduce to crush his hopes and expectations; he had requested to be informed of the arrival of any vessel in the port, and now stood watching the approach of the only one which had entered for several days. The wind being directly fair, she stood into the bay with a steady and rapid course.

“She must be Turkish,” said Antonio Margieri, who stood by; “and I think now I can distinguish their flag of truce: a short time, signor, will inform us who and what she is.”

On the Marino count Luna had also anxiously awaited the bark.—“It is some Turkish vessel by her rigging,” said a mariner who stood near. Sigismund felt that he knew not how to carry back such tidings to his mistress; he remained in fearful suspense, wishing, yet scarcely expecting, to hear the supposition contra-

dicted. "I know her well," exclaimed the man who had spoken before: "it is Il Gindeo, the Turkish admiral."

"The corsair who has infested our seas of late?" asked Sigismund.

"Call him what you please, signor: I know it is the ship which carried our commands, and from which we had our narrow escape not many weeks ago: he keeps a flag of truce too: what can have brought them here?"

Luna saw the signal and could not but be convinced that his hopes were disappointed: without waiting for further information, he bent his steps with a heavy and reluctant heart towards the castle. As he knew the unwelcome tidings he must communicate to his expecting guest.

"The will of Heaven be done," said Costanza with a sigh, when he had told his tale: "what dire misfortune has befallen my poor father. I fear to think."

"Hope still," said Sigismund: "this vessel may at least bring tidings of the Baron, and be the harbinger of his ap-

proach; I will return and collect for you all the information I can; but cheer your spirits, dear lady Costanza, and support the baroness under the ignorance in which we must yet keep her, till something more is known."

Costanza gratefully expressed her thanks, and Luna returned again to the Marino. The vessel now rode within a short and easy distance of the shore, from whence a boat was dispatched by the officers of Pandolfina, as captain of the port. The circumstance of such a vessel entering the bay, had drawn a considerable number of citizens to the Marino, and they were expecting the return of those whom don Giacomo had ordered out on the quiry.— "They say," said one of the crowd, "that it is Il Gindeo himself, who has kept the seas these many weeks with two-and-twenty galleys, and from the few arrivals we have had of late, I fear he will find his present expedition a most profitable one."

The barone del Nadore had joined the

azing multitude, and was addressing igismund on this most unusual event.—
“Were our seas properly protected,” he said, “such insults could not happen to our flag; but whilst our Spanish masters, and their vicegerent here in Sciacca, the lustrious don Giacomo, are revelling in the spoils of the people, and trampling on every noble who opposes their degrading tyranny, they have no time or inclination to oppose the enemies of Christianity. This bragging pirate, if I mistake not, has some secret intrigue with the Perollo and his ruffians. Were such men as count igismund di Luna in the high offices they ought to fill, we should not see the corsairs scouring our seas, closing all our ports, and outraging our feelings, by such bold and daring visitations; we shall soon see the captain of our port parading through the streets to hold a parley with this infidel.”

“Surely,” said Luna, “even he will not so far debase himself as to wait on the pirate in his den; whatever business may

have brought the corsair here; can I transacted in some manner less offensive to the feelings of a Sicilian noble, than I attending on his will where he shall choose to dictate."

The boat was now returning toward the shore, and the crowd impatiently awaiting them; that it was Serican himself was soon ascertained, but who what he wanted, still remained a secret. The barone del Nadore demanded of passengers of the boat's crew who had ascended the Marino, and seemed to be hastening to Perollo Castle, what had brought the corsair to Sciacca?

"To treat, I understand, with count Luna for the redemption of some prisoners he has on board."

Luna started at the reply, and demanded a further explanation. Either from the tone in which the question was put, or from an acquired enmity towards the count, the fellow rather uncivilly referred him to the baron Pandolfina for information, to whom, he said, they were haste-

ing to report the message they had received.

The blood of Luna rose indignant at the insult, and he rushed unattended to the beach below, and commanded some boatmen to convey him immediately to the ship; to be indebted to Perollo for information or assistance, was more than the spirit of Luna could endure, and if, as he already feared, the baron Solanto was the captive, he wished, at all events, to stop the interference of any one beside himself in effecting his deliverance.

The count was some minutes before he found any one to convey him from the shore, and as he was stepping into the boat, part of the port-captain's men, who had remained with their vessel, advanced, and peremptorily ordered that not a soul should stir, until permission had been obtained from the baron Pandolfina.

Sigismund angrily commanded the boatmen to proceed; they still hesitated; and his opponents leaping in, quietly seated

themselves, and reiterated their order that not a soul should move. The rage of Luna was now unbounded; he stormed and threatened; but the men, assuring him all the time of their entire devotion to his excellenza's will, remained steady in their opposition. The count appeared as if determined to revenge himself by force when Del Nadore, who had followed him, came forward, and exerting his authority as principal magistrate of the city, and as a friend of don Giacomo, commanded the opponents of the count to retire, and allowed him to proceed; unwillingly, and after much debate, they did so. The fury of Luna remained however entirely unabated; he did not remember to thank the baron for his friendly interference; but almost unconscious of what he was about, ordered to be conveyed instantly alongside the newly-arrived vessel. The boatman proceeded, and Sigismund brooded over the public insult he considered himself to have received. Arrived alongside, the

rowers paused upon their oars. An officer looked over the ship's side, and demanded their names and business.

"Tell the pirate chief," said Sigismund, still tremulous with passion, "that count Luna is arrived to ransom and redeem his captive."

The questioner retired, and soon again appeared.

"The Turkish b... of the Ottoman... orders count Lun... to... he may to land; w... still flying on our t... met with its deserts, bef... eyes of all the citizens of Sci... T... hopes to find at Tunis some more c... friend of the baron Solanto to rescue him from slavery."

Luna sat for some moments motionless from fury and vexation. Thus to be insulted by one whom he considered as a corsair and a plun...; was more than he could at any tim...e borne, much less in his present state... irritation; but to

return bootless from his voyage, to publish the contempt with which he had been treated to all the multitude on shore, and, above all, how to meet the just reproaches of Costanza, and hereafter to excuse his intemperate conduct to the baron himself, overwhelmed him with a variety of distress, from which he knew no means of being extricated.

At length recovering in a slight degree, he replied to the officer, who was apparently watching his departure—"Ignorant, signor, of the rank and station of your commander, I only learned the circumstance of his requiring a communication with me from the citizens on shore; he will therefore excuse, I trust, my inadvertency, and inform me on what terms we are to treat."

The Turk again withdrew, and shortly after reappeared with the bassa's answer.—"Our admiral, signor, has sent on shore to the baron Pandolfina (who is, we understand, the port-captain) the terms on which he meant to treat, and through him

you ought to have applied; but no apology can now efface the insult you have offered."

"I have already made my excuses, signor," said Luna; "there can be no necessity for any intermediate intercourse between us. Commend me, therefore, to your commander, and say I wait to hear his resolution and demands."

To this conciliatory speech, however, Serican still remained unyielding.—"I have the bassa's strict injunction, signor, to order you instantly to leave the vessel's side. In addition to the first unprovoked insult offered to our admiral's high rank, he now considers, as a second aggression, the objection to treat through the person to whom you were referred. I am forbidden farther parley."

Sigismund sat for some moments in silence.

"What would your excellenza wish?" asked the boatmen.

"Return to land," was the reply;

"mention to none the circumstances of our voyage, and follow me to Luna Castle."

When they reached the shore, one of the men observed, "they have hauled down their flag of truce, and put their helm about; but with a wind like this, they must remain where they are, for out to sea they cannot get."

Luna felt some slight return of hope and on landing, ordered the people to follow him.

Del Nadore had waited his return, and pressed forward eagerly to inquire the particulars of his interview with Serican.

"I have not seen him, nor has any thing yet taken place," said Sigismund endeavouring to escape.

The barone followed with many offers of service, which Luna unceremoniously declined; his persecutor was however not so easily dismissed, but continued to accompany him towards the castle.

"The business, signor barone," he said, "in which I am engaged, is

of no pleasant nature; if I stand in need of your services, I shall command them." Del Nadore stared in astonishment.—"I cannot now be trifled with," said Laza, "and must request to be left."

With a bow of respect and wonder, the gentleman withdrew.

As the count entered his castle, he ordered one of his servants to request the baron Adriano would come to him, and sent others to summon to his presence the signors Calandrino and Infontanetta: he then proceeded to the gallery adjoining the baroness Solanto's apartments, and desired an attendant to inform the lady Costanza, without her mother's knowledge, that he wished for a few minutes conversation.

Whilst he expected her approach, the count endeavoured to collect himself, not to alarm, more than was unavoidable, the filial tenderness of Costanza, and to exculpate himself for his imprudence. She soon attended him, and eagerly demanded what information he had collected?

"The baron," he answered, "is in safety."

"And arrived?" asked Costanza, her countenance brightening with joy; but regarding the depression of his manner, she relapsed again into anxiety and terror.

"He is indeed on board this vessel; but his landing will, I fear, be some time delayed."

"My father well, and safely arrived in Sciacca!" she ejaculated; "let me instantly revive my mother with the tidings!"

"Not yet, not yet!" said Luna, seizing her hand; "there is a distressing circumstance still to mention, which must be kept from the knowledge of the baroness, and which you, I trust, will hear with firmness and self-possession."

Costanza could scarcely support her tottering frame, and gazed in silent agony upon the count.

"The baron is detained on board a Turkish ship of war."

"Is that the worst?" asked the daugh-

ter, breathing again from her overpowering fears.

"I trust it is," replied Luna.

"Then let his ransom instantly be paid; let his captors tax us to the utmost; willingly shall all we have redeem my father's liberty. If they ask a captive in return, our sovereign, I know, will gladly let them take their choice, to serve his gallant veteran Solanto. Repair, count Luna, instantly on board; comply with any terms they ask. Restore my father to liberty, myself and all besides shall gratefully be yours; nay, stay not to reply; let him be instantly released, and let me bless my mother by the news."

"I have already," answered Sigismund, with hesitation, "been off to the vessel."

"And what was your reception? what are the terms of ransom?"

"I was received with insult, all terms rejected, and referred to the Perollo."

"What says don Giacomo?" ejaculated Costanza.

“ Could I inquire of a Perollo?” replied Luna, extremely agitated.

She looked at him for an instant.—
“ My mother and myself are here, signor, under your protection till my father is restored; and I require you to attend me instantly to the castle of the baron Pandolfina.”

“ Impossible!” said the count.

“ Then unattended I must go. The courtesy of the Perollo will, I doubt not, render me all the service I require, and to him count Luna will hereafter be indebted for the ransom of his father’s friend.”

“ Torture me not, for pity’s sake,” said Sigismund; “ I have summoned hither my family and friends, and every exertion, dearest Costanza, shall be made to set your father free; do but confide in us; no reference shall then be wanting to our insulting foe, nor shall any sacrifice on our part be withheld.”

“ If from the baron Pandolfina we are

to learn the terms, he must of course be sooner or later referred to, and I see no advantage which advice can possibly be of in the affair; it will but cause delays equally distressing and needless, and if on every occasion my wishes, and the comfort of my family, must yield to this unnatural hatred, I cannot but measure your professions of regard by circumstances which will weigh heavily against their sincerity."

Sigismund looked displeased; but Costanza was unwilling to postpone for an instant the application to Perollo.—“At least,” she said, “let me endeavour to obtain an interview with my father during the treaty; surely this will not be denied.”

“Your mother, signora, will wonder at your absence; why should we alarm her? till your anxiety is terminated by the baron’s restoration to liberty, why agitate her mind? My friends will soon be here; trust me, we will decide without loss of time

what course we should pursue, and follow up our resolutions with celerity and dispatch."

A servant announced that the baron Adriano was waiting count Sigismund's commands; he again entreated Costanza to trust the negociation with himself and his friends, without any immediate reference to Perotto. Unwillingly she consented to a short delay, but feeling that her wishes were so needlessly sacrificed to Sigismund's unyielding enmity, she viewed him with a sensation of more dislike than she had ever felt since their introduction. To his endeavours to support her hopes or soon beholding Solanto, her answers were cold, and somewhat indignant; and she returned to her mother, exerting all her powers to hide the perturbation of her mind. The baroness had missed her from her room, and eagerly inquired if any favourable tidings had called her out?

"We may soon hope to hear some vessels are arriving," she said, "though

not the one we look for: yet my father's safety has been ascertained."

"His ship then," said the baroness, "has been seen? knowing he has been in safety since the storm, will tranquilize my mind, though he is not yet arrived."

"That he is safe, we have heard from undoubted authority," said Costanza, eager to give her mother comfort.

"Can I not see the persons who brought the information?" asked the baroness.

"Not yet, I fear," answered her daughter; "but, dearest mother, you will, I hope, be composed, now we know that my father is safe and well. We may expect him speedily, therefore reserve your strength to meet him joyfully, or to bear a few hours longer delay."

Sigismund having joined Adriano and his other friends, briefly stated the captivity of the baron Solanto, and his own ineffectual attempt to redeem him; indulging in those feelings of rage and indignation which the presence of C

had repressed. Upon the mention of the reference which had been made to Perollo, the baron Adriano observed, that the connivance of don Giacomo was evident throughout the whole affair.—“Why should the pirate,” he added, “send for you, my friend, to drive you back with insolence, without even an offer of terms? to what end and purpose does this Serican pretend to enter our port, but to treat with count Luna for the ransom of his friend? and for a slight breach of etiquette, breaks off all communication, affects to leave the port, and to bear away his captive to foreign slavery—a feint intended only to raise the price he will soon demand; and it appears, that to add to these insults, they wish to drive you, don Sigismund, as a suppliant to the power and influence of Giacomo.”

“We have already borne so many acts of oppression tamely,” said Calogero, “that they expect to find our spirits depressed, even to the point they wish; and that among his suitors and dependants,

Giacomo shall number the chieftain of Luna and Peralta."

"Their hopes and wishes then are vain," said Sigismund, "and we shall ere long teach this tyrant, that neither his insults are forgotten, or his power respected; that Luna scorns his friendship, and despises his attempts to bend the spirit of his party. But in the present instance, how shall we prevent the interference of Perollo, and induce this insolent Mahometan to restore Solanto? I would not again expose myself to be rejected and dismissed by the audacious savage; and what other means of treaty can be devised, which shall not involve an application to our insidious enemy?"

"Entrust the embassy to me," said Adriano; "it will be no difficult matter, spite of his sycophantic attendance on Perollo, to induce Del Nadore to accompany me on board. As one of the giurati of the city, his visit cannot be rejected, and once to gain the ear of Serican, will be, I doubt not, to deliver the

haron Solento from bondage. These infidel pirates cannot resist the charms of gold, and with the present wind their vessel cannot leave the bay; which circumstance will afford us time for action."

"Perollo will no doubt avail himself of this; and unless you wish to encounter him on board, the earlier you are in your application the better," said Calandrina.

When Adriano observed that the ransom demanded would probably be enormous, Infontanetta said—"I have been informed that this Serican has at times conducted himself with liberality and honour."

"Even had he done so till now," replied Adriano, "the influence under which he acts would stop the current of these rare virtues."

Sigismund cautioned him to remember that he had failed in his application from his style of address.—"The infidel," he said, "prides himself on his situation as admiral of the galleys now at sea, and requires to be approached with more sub-

mission than I thought myself to bestow."

"Fear not, my husband," he said, "I shall be at the height of my wish."

"The ransom," said Lina, "I shall not regard: it is necessary to restore the baron to his freedom without the interference of Percival. I shall accept him and easy. But be as firm as possible in all your movements, to save us from the anticipated evil, and to relieve the anxiety which the family of Salazar must suffer till the important negotiation is completed."

Adriano and Calandrino, in search of Del Nadore, returned to inform C friends were gone, according to the giurati of the city, that from himself to treat for the release of her father, and to yield to any request provided the baron was set at liberty instantly.

With this report she was rather

quillized, but still felt that an application through Perollo would have been the most effectual means, and that her wishes on the subject had been sacrificed to the groundless enmity which don Sigismund entertained against the house of Pandolina. Inspired by these sentiments, she received the information he brought with coldness, and immediately returned to her mother, who again inquired the cause of her absence.

“Only a further confirmation of the former intelligence,” replied Costanza “that my father is safe and well; though we may still have some short time to wait before we embrace him.”

With this the baroness was satisfied. She was by this time considerably recovered from her late indisposition; they had met the countess as usual, but she had not hitherto made any apology. Costanza however did not forget her conduct in the church, and considered some acknowledgment to her mother essentially necessary, yet did not wish to provoke

discussion of the subject of
of heretics. The Council of
only respect to the Council of
ness. The Council of
ering the Council of
Council of
person. The Council of
doline.

My good friend, I have been
again, and I have been
local, which I have been
scious of, and I have been
too prevented by the Council
iciently to know the Council
church, or not. I have been
I can now remember the
ness with which I have been
with what pleasure at the
freedom of intercourse which
er's return will give us. no longer
er the roof of count Luna, there will
no restriction upon us; and our inter-
tion may perhaps hereafter close the
appy discord between those who
ea."

"It would be delightful indeed," said Costanza, "to be the instruments of such a blessed event; but I fear your benevolent wishes will never be realized, whilst the baneful influence of his mother retains its power over the mind of don Sigismund."

"The count," continued the baroness, "is young, and has seen but little of the world; his unfortunate connexion with so violent and irritable a spirit, as I understand the lady Lucretia possessed, may have given a temporary shade to his character, which other scenes and gentler manners will in time eradicate."

"I almost tremble at the experiment," said Costanza, with a sigh.

Her mother apprehending that her spirits were subdued by anxiety respecting her father, attempted to change the conversation; but her thoughts would recur to those traits in the character of her future husband, which the last few hours had made visible. To know that such dark and deadly passions could find so

lasting an abode within his breast; to see so clearly that his impetuous violence of temper was to be restrained, neither by gratitude nor love, gave to Costanza ample scope for melancholy meditation and uncomfortable foreboding. In her father however she fully confided, knowing well that no power would induce him to sacrifice her peace to an union for which she did not feel sufficient inclination.

“ Donna Victoria,” said the baroness, “ appears but little altered for the time. The same affectionate and tender kindness shines through the majestic dignity of manner which always marked her character.”

“ It was strongly enough contrasted by the rudeness of the countess,” said Costanza, “ whose natural deformity of temper never could have shone forth more conspicuously than on that occasion.”

“ I lament,” replied the baroness, “ to hear you, my child, so frequently recur to the unpleasant manners of the mother of don Sigismund: forbearance from you

may greatly sooth her impetuosity, and will at all events preserve your own peace and happiness, when united with her son."

Costanza, unwilling to distress her mother by an argument, listened in silence; and the latter again resumed her commendations of the baroness Pandolfina.

The baron Adriano and Calandrino were for some time unsuccessful in their search for Del Nadore; but having at length met with him, before they could communicate the object of their mission, he had begun a long account of the preparations which don Giacomo was making, to visit the newly-arrived vessel.—"His ostentation," he said, "has already ordered out half the provisions in the city to feast these infidel marauders; the boats are loading with refreshments on the beach, and may even now be on their way to greet this worthy friend of Pandolfina."

"We must anticipate them, if possible," exclaimed Adriano; "and you, signor barone, must, at the request of count Luna, accompany us."

“ Don Sigismund did not deign to inform me on the subject when we parted,” said the baron; “ I have in vain endeavoured to make out from don Giacomo the whole of this mysterious proceeding, and am now required to become an agent in the business.”

“ The count has been disappointed in the negociation,” said Adriano, “ and knows no one whose influence and judgment he can so confidently trust to as yours, signor. I am to have the honour of attending you, and will explain upon the way the commission with which you are charged.”

With this speech Del Nadore was so well pleased, that he expressed his readiness immediately to go upon the expedition; and they proceeded for that purpose to the Marino: but upon their arrival there, a new dilemma disconcerted their measures. The boats loaded with refreshments were seen nearly up with Serican's ship; and Pandolfina, attended by a numerous band of officers and gen-

tllemen, was just entering his barge of state to follow them, although the flag of truce was down, and Serican endeavouring to stand out to sea again.

“It is out of all question for us to proceed now,” said Adriano; “the best method I can devise, is for you, signor del Nadore, to attempt to reach the party of Perollo, and obtain permission to go with him, that we may learn the circumstances of their interview. I will, in the mean time, return to don Sigismund, and consult with him upon the present state of his affairs.”

The baron hastened to the beach, and his friends waited until they saw him received by don Giacomo into his suite, and the party on their way to greet the Turkish admiral. They then returned to the Castel di Luna, to communicate their unsuccessful embassy to don Sigismund, who, disconcerted at the coldness with which his last communication to Costanza had been received, was in no good humour to listen to their information. He burst

into violent denunciations of revenge against don Giacomo, should he presume to treat for the ransom of his friend ; and forgetful of his own negociation being rejected, would willingly, at the moment, have consigned Solanto to perpetual slavery, rather than be indebted to Perollo for his release. His friends, the subtle Adriano and Calogero Calandrino, endeavoured by every artifice to add fuel to the flames of his rage.

“ It is certainly to be regretted,” said the former, “ that you, signor, did not wait to see how the illustrious port-captain would proceed, and by what means he would communicate with you upon the subject : he will now doubtless plead the information Del Nadore gave him of the failure of your voyage, to excuse himself for not having sent you the message which Serican delivered to his officers ; and the uncourteous rebuff the insulting infidel audaciously cast on you, will furnish ample subject for mirth and congratulation with these confederate plunderers.”

"To me there appears a deeper plot than this," said Calandrino; "Pandolfina will now release your friend, the baron Solanto: his son has already, I am informed, rendered some services to the ladies of the family; the gratitude both parties will doubtless claim, will be a fair excuse to justify the violation of all treaties with count Luna, and Solanto's wealth and influence will be no despicable portion for the young Perollo's bride."

"Sooner with my own hand would I immolate Costanza to my just revenge! The lives of Perollo and all his hated race, could not make amends for an insult such as this," exclaimed Luna.

"I watched their conduct in the church," said Calandrino, "and saw the evident marks of admiration with which the young gentleman regarded your blooming bride, count Sigismund. I saw the smile with which she honoured him at
ing, and the proud compassion with
he regarded your rejected ser-

Sigismund paced the room with frantic impatience.

"It is not now a time," said Adriano, "to manifest our feelings on the occasion. Let the events proceed unnoticed, and when the infamy and perfidy of the Perollo have reached their acme, then let us burst with all our power upon them, wash out in their blood the accumulated weight of injury and insult, which years have seen the house of Luna and Peralta suffering under, and give to all posterity a monument of revenge."

"My life and soul," said Sigismund, "are placed upon this marriage; sooner than see her given to Perollo, I would stab her at the altar."

"Some means," said Calandrino, "may be found to cut off this dangerous rival."

Luna stopped suddenly, and looking at the speaker, vehemently exclaimed—"Silence, signor Calandrino! am I to be again insulted by an offer of private assassination?—no; once more, I tell you all my vengeance shall be open as the insults

I have met with ; does Della Bardia's spirit possess the bosoms of you all?"

A silence of some minutes followed, and Luna began again to pace the apartment with vehemence.—“ Can no one find a remedy but this ?” he said.

“ For myself,” said Adriano, “ I have always held it vain and useless to strike at one amongst this hated race ; until a universal fate has swept them all from off the earth, till not a graft is left belonging to the cursed stock, we never shall be safe from private danger and public insult. For this alliance, signor, the wishes of every member of our house must follow yours : from every circumstance it offers domestic happiness, increase of wealth, of influence and power. The weight the baron Solanto is known to have in the Imperial court, will be a just and equal counterpoise to that of Pandolfina. His riches and family connexions will give, though not perhaps a local strength to our party here, yet an influence on those
 , most advantageous to your inte-

est; but once within
 Mo's artifice, we run
 words and action
 thful to his house
 must watch him
 A slight noise was
 in, the door flew
 ron di Salento was

the anti-
 and the

CHAPTER III.



I gradi primi
Piu meritar, che conseguir desio. TASSO.

UPON don Sigismund leaving the shore at the intercession of the barone del Nordore, one of Pandolfina's men, who had at first opposed his embarkation, repaired to the Casa di Perollo, to inform his commander of the circumstance; a messenger had been just sent to deliver the communication received from Serican to count Luna, but upon learning the steps which that chieftain had already taken, don Giacomo countermanded the message, and desired his officers to report to him all events which might take place.

The circumstance which had brought the bassa to Sciacca was soon known throughout the castle, and excited in Ferrico the liveliest emotion, in which the

baroness in some degree surprised - the former, in company with don Paolo, repaired immediately to the Marquis, and were soon informed of the return of don Sigismund alone; they saw then that the flag of truce was taken down, and the galley endeavouring to start out to sea.

"What can this mean?" asked Federico; "surely count Luna cannot have refused to ransom the prisoner."

"From the disposition of the count, it is not impossible that he may have had some dispute with the king; at all events let us hasten back, and learn what steps your father intends to follow."

On their return to the castle, all was bustle and preparation; the baron had been informed of the ill success of don Sigismund's expedition, and given orders that provisions of all sorts should be immediately collected and conveyed to Serican in his name, whilst he prepared to follow them himself; being joined by don Paolo and Federico, the party proceeded



to the Marino, where the state-barge of the port-captain was in waiting to receive them.

Don Giacomo was attired in splendid armour, but without any weapon of offence; the insignia of his office were suspended from his neck, and above his open-visored helmet waved a magnificent plume. The attendants were in the dresses belonging to their stations, and all unarmed. As they were entering the boat, the barone del Nadore arrived upon the beach, and requested to be taken with them.

"We are already a numerous party," said don Paolo, "and cannot, I fear, signor, as we could wish."

"It matters not," answered Del Nadore, "if don Giacomo will permit me to attend him."

"The Turkish commander has taken down his flag of truce, and it is uncertain what reception we may meet with; you had better wait another opportunity, signor."

Pandolfina hearing the discussion, requested his kinsman would permit the baron to enter their vessel, which he did, and they pushed off from land. The wind had continued so verse, that the Sicilian had made but little way, and the large soon reached the port.

"Don Giacomo Pandolfina," said Pandolfina to an officer, "requests the honour of an interview with the Ottoman commander." The officer courteously invited on board, and arrived, saluted the admiral, and being invited to receive them, surrounded by officers.

"Excuse me, signor commandante," said don Giacomo, "for the unworthy offering which has been tendered to your acceptance; I had scarcely expected that your treaty with count Luna would have terminated so abruptly; but learning with surprise that you were about to leave our port, I have endeavoured by expedition to make up for the respect I should have

been proud to pay to so gallant an enemy; and I now am come in person to beg your indulgence for the slight attention time has allowed me to shew, and that you would command my services in any way consistent with the duties of my station."

"I feel and am gratified, baron Pandolfina," replied Serican, "by the confidence with which you honour me, for the liberal supplies we have received; and still further for this flattering visit, I must ever remain your debtor."

"The wind, signor, is adverse to your sailing; if you can anchor for the night within the bay, I trust that to-morrow I should be enabled to offer something more worthy your acknowledgments."

"I entered Sciacca, don Giacomo," said Serican, "with no hostile feelings; I was quitting it under a sense of unmerited insult. Count Luna, I was informed, came to the side of our vessel, and desired to see the corsair who commanded. Such contempt to the Ottoman arms and to

myself as an individual, I could not pass over; it was not from inadvertency, and I think not ignorance; under these circumstances, I was about to depart, with the feelings of anger such a reception must naturally cause. I shall now leave your port with regret that duty obliges me to decline your hospitable offer, and with a lasting recollection of the kindness and the honour you have done me; from this time forth the sea is open from Cape St. Marco to Cape Bianco, and no vessel under my command shall commit any act of hostility within the limits of the baron Pandolfina's jurisdiction*."

Don Giacomo expressed his gratitude for the bassa's kindness, and regretted that he should have been disappointed in the object of his expedition to Sciacca.

"I cannot consider my expedition fruitless," replied the admiral, "since it has given me the pleasure of this introduction; but the wind," he added, "is so

* This promise was punctually kept for some years, even after the decease of don Giacomo Perollo.—M.S.S.

strongly against us, that we make but little way at present; allow me to hope you will go down into my cabin, and accept such a welcome as the circumstances afford."

The invitation having been accepted, after they had been a short time below, the bassa addressed himself to don Giacomo.—"My intention in entering your port, signor," he said, "was to negotiate with count Luna for the ransom of a Sicilian nobleman, whose fortune has made my captive. I understand he has connexions in Sciacca, and my wish in coming hither was to relieve the anxiety of his friends, and to spare him a useless voyage to Algiers or Tripoli. Summon the baron Solanto," he added, turning to an officer; "he has been our captive for a few days only, having been driven out to sea by the late gales."

The baron here entered the cabin.

"The baron Pandolfina," said Serican, "and these his friends, are perhaps known to you, signor, though they are not the

persons whose services you had expected would redeem you; I have already informed you of the unprovoked aggression which induced me to take down my flag of truce, and forbid all further intercourse with count Luna; it is against my will and former intentions that I detain you still a captive, but on your friend, the count, the blame must rest, and not on me."

"Amongst these my countrymen," said Solanto, "I shall not lack the means of raising whatever ransom you may demand, signor; the character of the baron Pandolfina is not unknown to me, nor mine I think to him, and I may, I trust, rely on his security, if such will be accepted by yourself."

"Willingly, signor," exclaimed Perollo; "tax me as you please."

"I cannot indeed," replied Serican, "accept your liberal offer, baron Pandolfina; I feel deeply indebted to your kindness, and could not in return receive the

sacrifice you thus nobly tender ; the baron di Solanto is yours, free and ransomless."

A pause of some length ensued. Solanto appeared overwhelmed by his feelings.

"Your excellenza overrates my trifling services," said don Giacomo. "I shall consider them as amply repaid should I be permitted to discharge the ransom so justly due to the baron's gallant captors."

"Which I would most gratefully receive," said Solanto, "till circumstances allow me to repay your kindness, signor Perollo."

"No," said Serican, "to the baron Pandolfina you are indebted for your liberty, signor; from henceforth you are free; but I have yet a service to require at his hands," he continued, turning to don Giacomo.

Pandolfina bowed.—"Nay, it is, I hope, no ungrateful task; have I your permission to propose it?"

"The bassa Serican is too good and

gallant a subject to offer any thing derogatory to the duties of my station ; therefore, though ignorant of your wishes, signor, I think I may pledge myself to the performance of them."

Serican rose from the carpet on which he was seated, and left the cabin, which he soon re-entered, leading a female, whose face and figure were shrouded beneath a thick veil.

" For this fair prize," he said, " I am indebted to a train of accidents which she herself will hereafter explain. The signora Landolini is a Sicilian by birth, and has been forced from her home by Tunisian rovers; I have pledged myself to restore her to her friends, and now commit her to your charge, assured that her treatment will be such as her unprotected youth and beauty imperiously demand."

" And those," said the lady, in a tremulous voice, " whose fate connected them with me?"

" They all are free," said Serican ; " from the moment of our meeting, lady, I gave

you my assurance that you should find in me a protector and friend."

"Nobly and gracefully has your promise been performed," replied the lady; and as she stooped to kiss his hand, tears forced themselves from her eyes, falling from beneath her veil, which she had slightly raised. Serican also seemed deeply affected, and both remained silent for some time to recover their composure.

The baron Solanto anxiously inquired if any of the party could give him information on the subject of his family?

"My son," said don Giacomo, "has the honour of being acquainted with the baroness, and will give you all the information in his power."

"I had the pleasure," said Federico, "of seeing the baroness and donna Costanza di Solanto a few days back; the latter was well, but for her excellenza, I am sorry to say she seemed indisposed, which, however, I learn proceeded from the anxiety of mind your absence, signor, occasioned; the cause being thus happily re-

men, he informed the baron that every thing was prepared for his conveyance on shore, and added, "that he hoped the inveterate enmity of count Luna would not prevent him from seeing himself and family at the Casa di Perollo."

"My friendship with the late count Luna," answered Solanto, "is my only connexion with the family, and has induced me to make this visit to his son; but whatever may hereafter be the relationship between us, a powerful sense of gratitude must ever make me anxious to deserve the friendship of the baron Pandolfina;" and turning to the admiral, he added, "with your permission, signor, I shall now hasten to embrace my family; and should the future fortunes of my life enable me to shew my deep remembrance of this eventful day, the name of Serican shall be to all his countrymen a safeguard and protection: one request I yet must make—to add to all your other bounties, may I be permitted to ransom my unfortunate attendants?"

“Mention them not, signor ; I will arrange with the baron Pandolfina every thing respecting them entirely to your satisfaction : and now, farewell, and may the future fortunes of your life be free from such distresses as you now are rescued from !”

Solanto then departed, after renewing his thanks for this additional kindness, and hastened into the barge which awaited him ; its progress, though scudding before the wind, seemed slow to his anxious wishes, and the distance from the Marino to the castle of count Luna an immeasurable way. When arrived at the gateway of the mansion, he paused an instant, and reflected on the danger of too sudden a surprise to the baroness ; and demanding of the servant who ushered him in to see the count only, he learnt that he was engaged with the baron Adriano and another friend.

“Conduct me immediately to the apartment of the count, and announce the

baron Solanto," he said; and to the great astonishment of don Sigismund and his party, interrupted their discussion by his unexpected appearance.

Antonio Margieri, a confidential officer attached to Perollo, had seen the baron Solanto in safety to the abode of count Luna, and from thence had proceeded without delay to the Casa di Perollo, to execute with all possible expedition a private order he had received from his commander, and returned to await his departure from the Turkish galley.

When Solanto had left the vessel, the conversation became general, and Pandolfina had an opportunity to discover the great fund of general information and the good sense of the Turkish chief; his air and manners were characteristic of quiet grace and dignity, and his countenance, though marked with traces of his Jewish origin, strikingly handsome and prepossessing; and though evidently aware of his high rank and station, he appeared

per to shew his sense of the obligation
had received by the visit of Perollo,
frank conduct, and flattering confidence.
Europeans in general form their ideas of
Turks from the barbarous customs of
Moors and Algerines; they give them
credit for few of the virtues, and none of
elegances of polished life; they con-
sider them as savages but half-redeemed
in their wild and wandering habits, bi-
ased to a sensual faith, and trained up
in the grossest ignorance: far different is
the case with those Turks whose birth has
placed them above the lowest class in so-
ciety; the treasures of Arabian knowledge,
the beauties of its poetry, and the more
valuable worth of its morals and philosophy,
though generally hidden from the Chris-
tians of the west, have been to the ori-
nals a mine of literary wealth; their re-
tired habits, and extreme aversion to asso-
ciate with Europeans and unbelievers,
have concealed from us many of their most
valuable traits; and for the sensuality of
their lives, there are few amongst them

who indulge in all the liberty their law allows them.

Serican, though perhaps not a Turk by descent, yet had been brought up at Constantinople and in the faith of Mahomet, and had imbibed in all things the manners of his native land. His reception of the Perollo party was graceful and easy, and his high-breeding shewed itself more particularly in the facility with which he addressed to each individual the compliments most calculated to please.

Federico had on the first opportunity communicated to the signora Landolini the intelligence of Gaetano's expedition in search of her, and of her father's expected arrival in Sciacca, and removed her desire to set out instantly for Trapani, by assuring her that he would not be long delayed, and that to relieve him from suspense, the baron would without loss of time send a courier to meet him.

Upon the return of Margieri, Pandolina left the cabin to speak with him ; he had been ordered to bring on board a large

sum of money, to be divided amongst the crew, the news of which largess soon reached the bassa.

"I did not expect this treachery, signor," he said, with a smile, "or I would have prevented it; you will not allow me any disinterested means of returning your kindness, but are resolved to purchase the admiration of us all; the attendants of the lady and of the baron Solanto are few in number, and their freedom a most unworthy offering; wear then this diamond in memory of Serican's respect and admiration of these courteous acts, which form the brightest ornament of Christian chivalry."

"Your excellenza overpays my poor endeavours," replied Perollo; "vouchsafe to receive this chain, and I will gratefully accept your jewel."

He then took the chain from his neck, and presenting it to the bassa, received the diamond ring which the commander wore, who also begged to offer presents of arms to the companions of Pandolfina, the ac-

ceptance of which appeared to confer the greatest pleasure on the generous donor."

"It is with regret," said don Giacomo, "I mention the necessity of parting; we have already trespassed largely on your time as on your liberality, signor; allow me to conduct the signora Landolini on deck."

Don Giacomo immediately descended, and returning with the lady, requested that his barge might be ordered. The signora approached Serican, as if to repeat her acknowledgments for his protection and kindness. She stood before him for an instant, as if collecting her thoughts; then throwing herself on the deck, embraced his knees, and wept with emotion.

The Turk was agitated in no common degree.—"The duties which humanity demands," he said, "require not, my child, this vehemence of gratitude. Alla be praised, that during my eventful life, 'midst all the scenes of war and blood which Serican's uncertain destiny has made him witness, the natural feelings of his

t have not been warped to acquiesce
 nst the pleadings of distress. I thought
 : a wanderer upon the ocean, surpris-
 ed and in danger; it required some
 great exertion of virtue or compassion
 herish and relieve thee. Believe me
 the self-gratulation which this action
 gs, I am most amply repaid. In
 returning to comfort an unhappy fa-
 : The early sufferings which your
 th has known, as they have been suf-
 ns to call your resignation and pas-
 ce into action, will, I doubt not, be
 ns to all your future days. With
 e and joy your father will receive
 n his child, who has passed through
 trials of sorrow and temptation, un-
 ken by the one, and unsubdued by the
 r. His days shall close in calm enjoy-
 it, rendered brighter by the hopeless
 elation under which he now is groan-
 ; for thee, I trust, are many happy
 ns in store, and if amongst your joys
 short acquaintance is remembered, it
 be a comfort to me to reflect, that

with the thoughts of Serican your heart will mingle the recollection of those services he so rejoiced to render. But come, recover from this agitation; I shall deliver you into the hands of one whose kindness will, I know, restore you without delay to your afflicted parent: summon the other prisoners," he continued, as she still silently wept upon his arm.

The men being arrived from below, the bassa addressed them in a few words, telling them that to don Giacomo Perollo they were all indebted for their liberty. They expressed their gratitude, and were ordered by Perollo into one of the boats which had conveyed the refreshments on board, and which had remained by Margieri's order.

"Those who belong to the baron Solanto," said Perollo, "shall be conducted to Luna Castle; the rest shall remain with me; and this fair lady will, I hope, find the Casa di Perollo a happy home, until I have the pleasure of consigning her to her father's arms, who in three days time

will, I hope be in season. In the mean time the baroness Farnham will be proud to shew her every kindness and attention.

"In giving this present to your charge, don Giacomo," said Senatore, "I do it in the fullest confidence that she will meet no more the obstacles which those who ought to have been her protectors have thrown in her way, and which compelled her to expose her person to the dangers of the ocean, unprotected and defenceless."

"Of all the favours your excellenza has, with so bounteous a hand, heaped on us," replied Perollo, "this act of trust conveys the most flattering sensations to my heart; the lady shall command the services of all my house, and will, I dare affirm, meet among us no lukewarm friends. And now, I permit me to repeat the assurances of high esteem and gratitude for the of this generous reception; and at any time the services of a Perollo faithful to you or yours, to beg you command them to the utmost; I

farewell, but I have prolonged my visit to the last moment."

"Farewell, don Giacomo Perollo! here after you will find that Serican forgets not such attentions as he has received from you; and should it be written in the book of fate that we shall meet again, there is a pleasure in store for me, which I would willingly encounter many difficulties to enjoy. Receive this pledge of my regard," he added, giving the signora to his arm.

"May Heaven repay the debt of Marguerita's gratitude, in many years of happiness to come!" articulated the lady in a faint tone.

"Alla bless thee, my child!" said Serican, as don Giacomo bore her down the vessel's side, and covered his face for a moment with his hand. The rest of the party repeated their respectful adieus, the rowers dipped their oars, and lightly the barge flew over the waves to the white walls of Sciacca.

The signora Landolini sat by don Gia-

omo, conveyed it up the hill and
 ently still keeping the quantity of
 est of the party were standing in front
 of the Turkish wall and the entrance of
 hind the large fountain the door which
 conveyed the prisoner prisoner.

The friends and acquaintances of don Gi-
 como had heard the arrival of his son
 the success of his expedition and were
 assembled on the hill to greet his
 greet his return. The populace attracted
 by the same cause had looked on witness
 the spectacle, and the greater part of the
 city appeared collected to receive them.

When the barge touched the beach, a
 cry of "Viva il Perollo!" was raised by the
 multitude on the shore, and echoed by
 those on the Marino above.

As don Giacomo conveyed on shore the
 prize entrusted to him, she nearly fainted,
 from the overwhelming joy of returning
 after such peril to her native land—the
 land which held the first and only object
 of her love and veneration, the father from

whom she had been so cruelly, so unexpectedly separated.

Pandolfina almost carried her from the beach to the Marino, and as he ascended the rugged cliff, again the cry of "Viva il Perollo," arose from the delighted multitude; they had scarcely reached the summit, and were waiting to recover the exhausted strength of the lady, when the party who had followed arrived also; their story was soon spread abroad, and again their shouts of joy arose; with difficulty don Giacomo made way through the exulting throng, and bore his interesting charge.

As they passed the statue of the Virgin near the convent of the Jesuits, Marguerita raised herself from the supporting arm of Perollo, and knelt upon the step before it; in silent respect the multitude stood or knelt around her; the influence of her devotion appeared to be communicated to all, and "Viva Maria" was mingled with their former shouts.

As the lady rose from the posture of

almost involuntary adoration, she was relieved from part of her distress, and proceeded on the rest of her way to the Casa di Perollo, with more confidence, though apparently confined by the great numbers who surrounded her. Then, passing the Castel di Luna, and having for a moment, don Giacomo ordered the advancement of Solanto immediately to join their master. "Viva don Giacomo! Viva Perollo!" was repeated again till the walls of the castle re-echoed with the shout.

On arriving at his own house, Francesco gave orders that the castle-gate should be thrown open to all who followed, and such entertainment be provided for them as could be procured at the time. He then conducted the lady to the entrance, to present her to the baroness, and as he withdrew, uncovered his head, and respectfully saluted the applauding crowd, with thanks for their kind and welcome approbation. Their transports of joy were doubled, and every blessing was invoked upon the house of Perollo.

short siesta, she was enabled to join the small party assembled in the evening.

The whole family emulated each other in kind attentions to their guest, assuring her that her father would soon arrive; "but for Pignatelli," said the baron, "I must lament the disappointment he will feel until his return to us, that his gallant expedition should end in a voyage to Tunis and back."

"The winds have so favoured him," said don Paolo, "that he may shortly be expected again in Sciacca."

Marguerita expressed her hopes that his kind exertions in her behalf would not expose him to any personal danger.

To this Federico replied, that every precaution had been taken for his safety, and that judging from himself and from his knowledge of Gaetano, he was sure his friend would consider the satisfaction of seeing her restored to her father, as sufficient recompence for any difficulties he might have to encounter.

The conversation afterwards turned upon the conduct of Serican, who was the object of universal admiration.

"The short interview," observed the signora Landolini to don Giacomo, "which your excellenza had with the bassa, displayed the more shewy features of his character; it required a helpless situation like my own to appreciate his gentler virtues: from the first hour of our meeting till delivered to your charge, his care and tenderness could not have been surpassed even by my dear father, nor his respectful delicacy censured by the severest scrutiny."

"You met the bassa in your way from Malta, I think, signora?"

"I was escaping from a persecution," she replied, "equally unmerited and unexpected."

"Pardon me," said the baron; "I did not wish to lead to any detail of your misfortunes, signora. Let us not recall such uncomfortable events." He then, during the remainder of the evening, directed the

few interviews, his vehement affection and imprudence, and her extreme youth and inexperience, made her consent to elop with him; and Vincentio found he had a wife to take care of, before he knew how to provide for himself. He carried his bride immediately to a cassino he had hired in a very small retired town on Etna, where they remained, contrary to their fears and expectations, unmolested by either family. The baron Landolini, knowing he could do nothing further for his son's advantage, felt that he had little right to add to his embarrassments; and the lady's father, as she had not formed a connexion which could disgrace his name, made a great merit of his exceeding moderation, in allowing them to quit the world by such quiet means as starvation, for nothing would ever induce him to assist them with a single dollar.

Vincentio, during the first few months of his married life, thought himself the happiest of the happy. In his wife he had beauty and gentleness; the cheer-

fulness of extreme youth, and entire devotion to and dependence on himself and even afterwards, though she had been taught nothing which could make her a very useful counsellor, or give her much courage to bear difficulties, still she never embittered them to her husband by futile complaints; and often by her affectionate endeavours to cheer him, made him forget all but his happiness in possessing her. Not long however did she live to enjoy or suffer with him; for in the second year of their marriage, in giving birth to a female infant, she expired.

Had they possessed fortune suitable to their rank, and lived in the society they were born in, it is possible that Vincentio might have felt less acutely than he did the misery of losing her. There seemed to him a vacuum in life which nothing could ever fill. She had suffered with and for him, and he was no longer certain there was one who ever lamented his absence, and rejoiced in his return, and who thought belonging to him was alone a

sufficient remuneration for every sacrifice. Suffering tries affection, and if it outlives harassing disappointments, and the fretting detail of perpetual privations and anxieties, it is safely to be trusted.

For some months after the death of his wife, Vincentio could scarcely endure to see his child, or even to remain in his house. But what parent can resist the innocent smile with which opening perception illumines the countenance of an infant? and when time had a little softened the character of his grief, and his person became known to his little Marguerita, her infantine endeavours to attract his notice, and the soft clasping of his fingers by her little hands, taught him he had still something to love.

During the years of mere childhood he was often absent from her for months, on service, or otherwise engaged; but found that each time he felt more interest in returning. And by the time it was necessary to think of her education, he had determined not to part from her, except

Marguerita had always promised to be as lovely in person as had been her unhappy mother; and at fifteen, it certainly did not require a father's partiality to think her surpassingly captivating. What little society she had seen since she came into the neighbourhood of Trapani (and before she had seen none) was of the first order; for besides don Vincentio's naturally-good taste, he felt an allowable pride in taking all possible care that his own imprudence should not tempt out of their rank any of his name and race; and therefore it was, that Marguerita had perhaps more strict ideas on the subject of birth and family, than many who, from living where titles and honours are never questioned, are never led to prize them.

When that day were not in general to reading, but Landolini in retirement had been forced to books for study, consolation, and amusement; his daughter, naturally imitating the type of her father, was so interested her, and having

[illegible]

certain that beauty would never be a misfortune to her, as it had been to her mother; and besides, in Catholic countries, convents offer at all times safe and honourable asylums to unprotected females. He took her sometimes to Trapani, where he had a few friends, whose praises and admiration of his child delighted him; but he always felt happy to bring her home again; she was of too great value to be quite rational about.

Time rolled on quietly enough; don Vincentio had few cares, and no calamities; and all his vivid feelings were centered in his daughter, now just seventeen.

One morning he received a message, which made it necessary for him to go to Trapani; and when he ordered his horses, Marguerita said—"Take me with you, dear father; I have not been out for an age."

"No, my love, you have not; but I cannot take you to-day, for it is possible I may not return this evening, and I shall

engaged — — — — —
are from the — — — — —
to the — — — — —

Then I — — — — —
is as — — — — —

I will — — — — —
only — — — — —
s, my — — — — —

After the — — — — —
walked to a — — — — —
home, and — — — — —
rked a light — — — — —
t the coast.

I wonder what — — — — —
said; "for a time — — — — —

I should think — — — — —
gh."

Yes, signora; but I don't suppose
do at present; very likely they are
irs, and waiting till evening to catch
y little vessels coming into port."

uring the rest of the day, Margue-
employed herself with her books, her
oidery, and her birds; and was say-

ing to her attendant at night, that it would be useless to sit up longer for her father, as it was much beyond his usual hour of returning, when they heard a violent noise at the entrance of the house like scuffling and altercation, and almost immediately a frightful shriek and the fall of some heavy weight. Maria stood speechless and motionless; Marguerite flew to the door to attempt securing it but the whole alarm was so rapid, that she had scarcely reached it, when it was pushed open with such force as almost to throw her down; she caught by the nearest piece of furniture; and pale, breathless, and almost lifeless with terror, saw three ferocious-looking ruffians enter the room. They stared around them, apparently very much disappointed at the appearance of the apartment, which presented nothing of value; and began to utter, in their lingua Franca jargon, furious imprecations against the owner and his poverty, when someone of seemingly-higher rank, entered and asked what they had done?

"We are making good progress in our
containing machine work in terms of
quieting the too active press

The change arrived at noon and his eyes resting on Mitchell he said - "Why have we been considering what I am doing, if it is mine?"

As he approached her she did not move. She screamed and fell as if in protection to the nearly-fallen Mary. The sailors knew she could not escape and after surveying her a moment with cool, unflinching determination, ordered her on board the ship, as if she had been a link of merchandise.

Horror now gave her words, and in agony not to be described or imagined, she implored to be left. "My father will ransom me with all he has! but if you know what pity is, do not inflict on him the torment of missing me!"

They heard her with the coldest indifference, and muffling a large cloak around her, spite of struggles, prayers, and shrieks, bore her to the shore.

"It is a dark night," said one of the wretches; "make a funeral pile for our Cerberus there; it will light us on board."

The order was obeyed; but Marguerita, on being taken from the house, lost all consciousness of her situation, and remained so for some time. When she recovered her recollection, she found herself lying in the cloak; the noise over her head, the darkness and the pains in her limbs, from her previous fright and struggles, were altogether so overwhelming, that she was near relapsing again into insensibility, when a man entered the cabin with a lamp and a cup. He approached her, lifted her up, and poured some wine down her throat, waited a moment or two to see that it revived her, and looking satisfied that death would not rob them of their prey at present, left the unhappy girl to darkness and her own reflections. She was now sufficiently recovered to remember what had befallen her. With memory and thought came terror, far, far beyond any thing she had known or fan-

ed; but when she thought of her father and his despair, she forgot herself, and gave way to an agony of tears.

Daybreak brought even to her some relief; she could look from the little cabin window, and hoping to see some friendly sail, forgot for a moment the impossibility of making any attempt to profit by it. She tried to think of what must be her probable fate; of what she ought to do and might say to induce the pirates to allow her father to ransom her. But still all her thoughts were but excursions from one settled idea of intense misery, and always ended in the same point—her father, and his cheerless desolation. She had never seen him otherwise than placid and dignified, of course she could not recollect his grief at her mother's death; and don Vincentio had been too deeply schooled in adversity, to be discomposed by trivial annoyances. Those who have known real afflictions, are alone able to give their due insignificance to trifles; and

that Marguerita had never seen her fat under the influence of any violent feeling, added to her alarm by the uncertainty of how he might be affected by it. He was still a young man, but anxiety had undermined his health, and he seemed more than ten years older than he really was. Should he sink under this blow, and leave her in the world alone! for so thought must those feel who are connected by no tie of affection with any fellow creature.

The idea was too terrible, and it was almost a relief to see the dark-countenance being who attended with her food. She knew that to injure her health would be to increase her powers of acting and thinking for herself, should occasion offer, and therefore, though she felt not much appetite, and the viands were not very tempting, she forced herself to eat as much as was requisite, to support her strength and spirits.

When next any one entered the cab

she ventured to inquire whether they were bound? and was answered in one word, **Tunia.**

"Then slavery," she involuntarily exclaimed, "is to be my bitter portion."

"Yes," said the man, and departed.

Without employment of any kind, pent up in her miserable prison, the day seemed an age of suffering; and when night again came, she wrapped herself up in her cloak, and laid down on her hard couch, determined to seek for a few hours forgetfulness, and thankful to Providence that the day had worn away in only passive suffering; she thought of her distant and loved father, and wept herself to repose. Weariness of mind and body made her sleep soundly till morning, and she awoke refreshed; but was almost immediately sensible of having been roused by a great increase of noise over her head; and a moment after, the discharge of cannon shook the vessel till it seemed separating, and nearly deprived poor Marguerita of her

senses. The firing became tremendous to her, and with little intermission.

"Good Heaven," she thought, "for what am I reserved!" and in that hour of dismay and loneliness, felt the support of the pure faith her father had inculcated, and relied on Providence with the confidence of youthful belief and innocence. Seated on the floor, in a corner of the cabin, with her hands now lifted to heaven, and now pressed to her head, to deaden the distracting noise, she tried to prepare for the destruction of the shallop, or her own liberation, with resignation to Him who cannot err.

At last the heavy firing ceased altogether, and from the violent noise of persons treading heavily and falling, with the clashing of arms on deck, she imagined the vessel was boarded. The struggle seemed still obstinate, and the torment of suspense to the lonely listener, whilst it lasted, was agonizing beyond all description.

[illegible][illegible]

You are not, ~~but~~ in the power of
who are most bound to protect
hers from oppression; I mean the

knights of St. John of Jerusalem.

Giuglio, our commander, is severely wounded, and cannot, I fear, come with you. Will you allow me to conduct you to him?"

Marguerita was so happy to leave prison, that she did not hesitate a moment about following her young conductor. When she came on deck, she was too much confused to notice distinctly the various objects around her of dead and dying, which would at another time have appalled her senses. She was soon presented to Giuglio, a strikingly handsome man, looking very faint from pain and blood, and supported by those who attended him.

"See, here is a prize we have recovered from the corsair, sir. What a lucky find I was to find her! I am determined to go forth to search all ships, the very first opportunity of boarding them."

"Hush, Sforza! be quiet for once, you not see the commander is faint, and the lady frightened?—Sir," said the

LUCA AND FERDINAND

officer to the captain, "the boat is now ready; perhaps she had better go on board the galley with you. There is no place here fit for her."

The captain signified his acquiescence and was lowered into the boat followed by Marguerita. They were now at the galley's side; but with the additional figure of being raised into it and taken to his cabin, don Giuglio hinted. Marguerita was placed in a large room by herself, and some refreshment given her, which she very much needed. She now began confidently to hope to be restored to her father; and with all the ardour of exuberant youth, had calculated how long she might be detained in Malta, and how soon reach Trapani, where meet her father, and how happy she should be.

In such pleasing reveries she had passed several hours, when she received a message from don Giuglio d'Aguilar, requesting to see her, with which she immediately complied. She found don Giuglio on a

couch, looking tolerably free from pain. He smiled as she approached, and said—
“ I must trust to my condition to make my apologies, signora, both for sending for you now, and for the little attention I paid you on our first introduction.”

“ No apologies can be requisite to me, signor; to you, perhaps,” she said, “ I ought to pay some compliments on your victory, and thanks for my rescue; but,” she added, blushing, “ I have been little in the world, and my father always told me, that all knights of St. John were humane, and that combat and victory are with them synonymous.”

“ Pray sit near me, and tell me who is the happy father, whose lessons of exquisite flattery you have so well remembered.”

“ My father is the chevalier Vincentio Landolini; in his absence the corsairs brought me from the neighbourhood of Trapani.”

“ Thither then, I suppose, signora, you wish to return. I was desirous, as we are

so near Malta, to know before our landing, what would most contribute to your comfort ?”

“To be sent instantly to suspend the anxiety my poor father must feel.”

“I am sorry not to be able to take you immediately home; but to go into a Sicilian port would be against my present instructions; therefore we must go to Malta with the prize. But I am sure the grand master’s kindness of heart would induce him, if there was no vessel bound for Sicily, to equip one on purpose, rather than detain you under such circumstances.”

Marguerita looked the thanks which she could not utter for these encouraging assurances; and D’Aguilar thought he had never seen any creature so lovely.

A few hours sail brought them into the harbour, under the walls of fort St. Angelo. The illustrious La Valetta had not yet immortalized the scene. The white rocks were unconscious of the majestic and impregnable fortifications, which were soon

which she had at first been overpowered in language refined and elegant; her birth and education were stamped on every word and action; whilst don Giuglio gazed in admiration and delight, and lamented his present helplessness the more, as it prevented his taking personal charge of his beautiful protégée in landing.

As the knights had no establishment of their own, he had sent ashore immediately for permission from the grand master to remain during his illness at the house of a widowed sister. The request had been granted, and he was conveyed thither in a litter, Marguerita following, escorted by Enrico Sforza, whose spirits were about on a par with her own; but she nevertheless felt no small share of embarrassment and alarm, at being thus left to the humanity of strangers, and for the first time to her own guidance.

Arrived at the house of the marchioness Villagiusta, she was made as easy as the most perfect hospitality and polished elegance of manners on the part of her hostess.

ould make her. The marchesa was years older than D'Aguilar, and handsome enough to be taken for her, but still resembling him in nance and manners ; she seemed as beyond measure about his wound, apologized to Marguerita for paying attention at first to him ; " but in- she said, " I have been so long from my family, that his coming is ht I hardly know how to enjoy ly."

w hours rest was absolutely neces- don Giulio, after the fatigue of ; and to the marchesa Margue- plained at length the occasion of passing on her hospitality, and in- how soon she was likely to get a nce to Sicily, as every hour nce more painful to her, account and that of her e wind is to directly a ing to Sicily," said the ill it changes, I can

idea; but I imagine the moment it is fair some means of sending you safely may be arranged; in the mean time, as no effort of yours can change the direction in which it blows, pray be as happy as you can you must help me to amuse and keep up my brother's spirits, who, unless he is very much altered of late, will not be very patient under confinement."

Numerous visitors called in the course of the afternoon to pay their compliments to the marchesa, to inquire after signor d'Aguilar; and perhaps a few might be curious to see the beautiful captive he had rescued from the Tunisian.

The marchesa's house was evidently the resort of all the gayest society in Malta but a very small proportion were ladies and that certainly not the one best liked by the mistress of the house, who openly professed a preference for the conversation of gentlemen, and affected to treat as silly prejudices the opinions of those who ventured to intimate that a young and rich

widow had better live more among her own sex, and the grave rather than the gay of the other.

"I had quite enough of formality, age, and decorum, in the marchesa Villagiusta," she always said; "and as I married him to please my father by being rich, it would be very hard indeed if I might not spend the fortune thus acquired, in the way I like best. There is no danger now of my committing any great folly, since I was so reasonable at sixteen."

It would have been very useless to tell the lively marchesa, that habits of obedience may be the cause of acting more prudently under a father's eye at sixteen, than by our own guidance at thirty. According to her determination to do as she liked, so she lived. No one, as she herself asserted, could say any harm of her. She might have gone further perhaps; few thought any. She was publicly well received everywhere, and the idol of all those who preferred the splendour of her style of living, the fascination of her man-

ners, and the easy independence of her opinions, to the more safe but less attractive society of those graver matrons, who were but little seen in her circles. On the whole, she was by no means the person to whom the prudent affection of Vincentio Landolini would have entrusted his beautiful child.

In the evening, the marchesa very unceremoniously dismissed her guests, saying, she must pass an hour or two with her brother. On entering his apartment, they found him feverish, and out of spirits.

"The signora Landolini has been too captivating to allow you to think of me," he said; "however, thank you for bringing her at all."

"I dare say we should have found each other very captivating indeed by this time, if we had been indulging in a *tête-à-tête* ever since we left you; but we have been much better employed, in receiving the adoration of twenty cavaliers; so pray be very agreeable and grateful, my dear

brother, to recompense us for leaving them."

"And does the signora Landolini think the adoration of the crowd so alluring?" asked Giuglio, looking with an earnestness of delight he took little care to conceal on the surprised Marguerita, who, a good deal discomposed by a species of admiration so entirely new to her, replied — "That she had too little knowledge of the pleasure derived from a numerous society, to form any distinct idea of its value."

"I do not wonder that the cavalier Landolini should guard you carefully. I think, were I possessed of such a gem, I should be jealous of every one who beheld it, lest they should estimate its value as highly as myself."

"It is fortunate then, my dear Giuglio," said the marchesa, "for some fair dame, that your vows put it out of your power to play the tyrant."

"Why, Violante, is not the devotion and love of one unchanging heart, better

than the empty admiration of the multitude?"

"Yes, I suppose it might be; but somehow or other, hearts are terribly apt to change; and if the price I was to pay for such a lover-husband was to be having him for my gaoler, I should heartily wish him in a comfortable state of indifference."

"Are such your opinions, signora?" said Giuglio, looking at Marguerita.

"I have scarcely an opinion on the subject, signor; but I should suppose the approbation of her husband very essential to the happiness of a female; and that treating a wife like a suspected prisoner, was a bad way of gaining her affection."

"Oh, but you are taking my expressions in a light I did not quite intend; affection naturally indulges its object to its utmost power."

"Yes, signor, rational affection; but that is inconsistent with jealousy; because it could not exist without confidence and respect."

"Common sense, my dear Giuglio,"

said his sister, laughing, " makes sad havock with your romance."

" I hope the wind will change by to-morrow," said Marguerita, looking from the window ; " if my father did but know of my safety, I should not be so anxious."

" In a few hours," said D'Aguilar, " are you so impatient to leave us?"

" If I were not, signor, I should be quite unworthy the kindness of the marchesa and yourself."

To change the subject, and amuse her guest and the invalid, donna Violante sent for her lute, and sang to it, till it was time to separate for the night, which each was glad to do. The marchesa, notwithstanding her affection for her brother, and her good humour towards her young protégée, might have passed an evening more to her taste.

Marguerita was thoroughly tired of the various exertions her spirits had supported during the day ; and Giuglio was most blamably indulging his admiration for her,

to a degree that already made every thing else irksome to him.

Little accustomed at any time to set bounds to his feelings, he had become a knight of St. John in a fit of despair, because some one he had fancied himself everlastingly in love with, had married another, and his father, count d'Aguilar, felt greatly relieved by his so doing, and considered him tolerably safe from any additional folly of the sort, and admirably provided for, as he had three brothers older than himself.

Giuglio however soon forgot his love, in the variety of scenes in which his new profession threw him ; and poor Marguerita seemed likely to be the innocent cause of making him heartily repent his vows.

The next morning she found the wind still strong against all departures ; and day after day for a fortnight brought the same disappointment. Poor Marguerita tried to bear it patiently, and to be cheerful.

under her anxiety ; but her efforts were often vain, and she retired to give relief to her distress by tears. She was, as we have said, rational in an uncommon degree for her age ; but she was only seventeen ; and a more perplexing situation to a young girl can hardly be imagined than she was placed in ; away even from the only country she had ever known, without any guide, and obliged to entreat strangers for protection, and even the very means of subsistence, and that too under circumstances which made receiving them still more distressing.

The unthinking and impetuous Giuglio was in a few days so madly in love, that even her extreme modesty and dignified manners could not prevent his openly expressing it on every occasion, and persecuting her with the most passionate lamentations on his own thralldom. Whilst she was confined to a couch, she could sometimes avoid him ; but to add to her distress, he was soon able to move about the

house, and then she could scarcely ever escape from his pursuit, and glowing expressions of delight at her presence.

Accustomed to consider him as her preserver from slavery, she yielded to an innocent desire to testify her gratitude, by every exertion in her power to amuse and relieve the invalid, whose suffering she almost felt was for herself, without ever dreaming that she was encouraging a frantic degree of affection in D'Aguilar for her, and a tenderness in herself likely at least not to add to her happiness.

One evening she had been singing by his couch, and when she laid down her lute, and looked towards him, his eyes were fixed on her with an expression of such ardent love, that she sat confused and silent. Giuglio had carried her hand to his lips before she could think, and, covered with blushes, she rose to depart; when an old knight who stood by, but quite unthought of by either party, said in a grave voice—"My young friend, you

making your vows into heavier chains. Can you rescued that too beautiful creature from ; beware in time !”

Marguerita felt faint and sick for a moment ; but she had not erred wilfully, and the warning was sufficient ; she was shamed of the few tears that would fall on her cheeks ; but from that moment the illusion was past, and she gave no farther encouragement to the more culpable Aguilar.

In a few days he was well enough to bear an increase of society ; and the marquis received her evening guests in his apartment ; by this means he could judge of Marguerita in another light, than either captive whom his bravery had set free, or a female employed where woman's gentle and unassuming talents are apt to be most appreciated, in soothing the irritation of suffering, or enlivening the weariness of confinement.

In polished and cheerful society she attracted, without the slightest effort on her part, the attention of all. Her naturally-

good understanding, cleared of prejudice, and cultivated by her father, seemed more than commonly great; while her strikingly noble and elegant manners were sure to charm those who could not judge of her mind. The sense of pleasing gave new animation to her beauty, and Giuglio gazed and listened, till he forgot all the world besides.

It was in vain she argued on the folly of his love, and was indignant at his daring to express it. He agreed to all she advanced, and loved her the more for her reason and her anger. Every day made her feel her situation more irksome and more improper. She felt herself insulted by his professions, and distressed by the air of hopeless wretchedness he assumed when compelled to silence. Even in company she could not shake off his persecuting attention; for it is easy to make a young woman seem so entirely the property of one person, that no one else ventures to pay her the least attention.

She complained at last to the marchesa,

who only laughed, and told her it was a matter of course for Giuglio to be in love with a beautiful girl he had rescued from slavery; and that to be in love was, with such violent and romantic people as him, to be completely disagreeable; that he knew very well, if he chose to be reasonable for a moment, that his father would use all the influence he possessed to prevent his procuring a dispensation from his vows, as he considered them the only safeguard his family had over his furious and ungovernable passions.—“ My dear young friend,” she continued, “ pray listen to his vagaries quietly; it is the only way to keep him in any sort of bounds whilst you are here. And when you are gone, he will in course be violently miserable for a time, then interestingly melancholy, and then recover. So pray do not let him make you uneasy, and this adverse wind cannot last much longer.”

Notwithstanding the light way in which Donna Violante treated the matter, Marguerita felt that it was not right, and that

she ought to be protected from such a continued outrage to her delicacy. Her respect for her gay hostess declined in consequence, and she determined, as soon as the wind was fair, to allow nothing to detain her a day longer in Malta.

CHAPTER V.
~~~~~

La douleur qui consume n'éclate pas.      GENLIS.

**AFTER** more than a fortnight of continued disappointment, from the wind remaining in the same quarter, Marguerita had the happiness to perceive, on rising in the morning, that it had changed; in an instant she forgot all the delay, and was in imagination, already on her way to Sicily.

She was met by the marchesa with a cheerful smile of congratulation, and gay complaints that the very wind conspired against her pleasure, by setting free her lovely captive; "and I fear," she added, "when you reach your father, your remembrance of me can be only connected with the anxiety you have constantly suffered, from the beginning of our acquaintance, till, I was going to say, the end;

but I will hope, as you are young, and I am not very old, we shall meet again. But hush ! here comes Giuglio ; put off, I conjure you, a little of that brilliant animation at the prospect of leaving him, or we shall be favoured with a scene in his deepest style of tragedy.—Now, my dear brother,” she said, as he entered, “ we must exert ourselves to perform an act of most romantic self-denial, for we must hasten from us our charming friend ; by the regret we shall feel at parting from her, we may imagine how dreadful her father’s anxiety must be in his uncertainty at her fate.”

Marguerita’s feelings were, by the hope of seeing her father, by Giuglio’s air of wretchedness, and the marchesa’s kindness of manner, roused to such a state of agitation, as made it impossible for her to articulate ; and she hid her face on the shoulder of the marchesa, who stood with one arm round the waist of her protégée, while she used the other in animated gestures to illustrate her discourse.

Giuglio had thrown himself on a couch without speaking; the most violent feeling seemed to shake his whole frame; and at last, clasping his hands to his head, as if his senses were forsaking him, he said—  
“If she will condemn me to madness by going, she must, but I cannot send her.”

Marguerita lifted up her head, and replied—“Surely, signor, you will not forget the word of honour you pledged to send me in safety to my father; surely you will not emulate the inhumanity of the pirate, who tore me from him! you would not, you dare not, disgrace your order by detaining me an instant! I have trusted, notwithstanding your ungenerous persecution on a subject upon which you specially ought to have been silent, that when the time did come for acting, you would act honourably.”

“And did you trust me? did you place confidence in me? I will not disappoint you. I will not give you cause to hate me. I will go instantly and see what is

to be done, lest I again lose the power of acting as I ought."

For some hours Giuglio did not return, and when he did, the information he brought was any thing but satisfactory: no vessel of any sort would sail for Sicily for two or three days; the grand master was prevented, by reasons quite incomprehensible to poor Marguerita, from sending a galley on purpose; and, in short, there appeared no remedy, and she must wait a few days, or perhaps even a week. Longer it could not be, Giuglio said, and he had secured her a passage in the very first conveyance.

In proportion as she had been happy a few hours before, she was now miserable, and for some time neither attempted to restrain or conceal her tears. The marchesa and her brother said every thing they could think most likely to console her; and while, on the one hand, the marchesa entreated her not to let her spirits sink at the delay of a few days only, Giuglio implored that she would not destroy



the only remaining hour of the day, he expected to see her, and letting him see her again.

A week passed, and nothing came of it; each two or three days brought some delay, and Margherita found herself nearly as much a prisoner as in the Venetian shallop; it was the only day when visitors at the home of the marchesa, and if any person seemed likely to come with her beyond the usual limits of the day, the persecuting and importunate intentions of Giglio in consequence went their way; and she never went out but with him at her side.

The marchesa had no idea of any duty; feelings and desires being governed by the ardent love of a very handsome man of family, and was only restrained by politeness from laughing at her distress; her own opinions of female propriety were far from being so strict as to see the necessity of interfering in the cause of the persecuted damsel, and though she must have

more than suspected, still she never chose to know positively, that in her brother will alone existed the causes of delay ; and if she ever troubled herself to think about the matter, it did not appear to her that a week or two, more or less, could be of consequence to torment a person whose name was all she knew of him, and therefore she was gay and charming as ever though accessory to the direct misery of others.

One morning, to her constant question of—" Can I not go to-day ?" the marchesa answered—" If the report I hear true, all the galleys in the grand master's possession could not set you safely on the Sicilian shores at present."

" What is that, signora ?"

" Why that Serican, the famous Turkish admiral, of whom you have heard such terrific tales, under the name of Il Giude now keeps these seas with nearly thirty sail, and nothing can stir in or out the port whilst this blockade lasts."

Marguerita crossed her arms tightly

her bosom to repress the agony she felt, and left the apartment. On reaching her own chamber, she walked up and down for some time, unable even to think. At length becoming more composed, she sat down to endeavour to determine what she ought to do; to remain longer in her present situation she knew was at all events wrong, and therefore determined not to do so; and yet she thought, "if this report is really true, I have waited too long to venture now; surely the marchesa cannot have lent herself to assist her brother's disgraceful frenzy in detaining me." She knew that to speak to any of the guests would be difficult, and she was uncertain that any of them would interest themselves for her, if she could find an opportunity; to attempt corrupting the servants was dangerous, and besides, her early habits of honour and dignity rendered the idea disagreeable to her: the only person whom she ever saw, and to whom she felt able to apply, was the venerable Vauvilliers, the old knight who had so oppor-

tunely cautioned her against the allurements of Giuglio, and had at all times shewed an interest in her welfare; could she but find an occasion to communicate her distressing situation to him, she felt convinced that he would at least advise her how to proceed.

To effect this purpose, she wrote on a slip of paper, "Find an opportunity for me to speak to you unheard by any but yourself;" and concealing it about her person, anxiously waited for a day or two before the cavalier made his appearance. Giuglio, as usual, kept by her so immoveably, that she began to despair of escaping his notice for a moment, when fortunately a messenger arrived from the grand master, requiring his immediate attendance.

D'Aguilar did not appear very much pleased at the summons, which however he was obliged to obey, and endeavoured in vain to persuade Vauvilliers to accompany him.

After his departure more visitors arrived, and the knight approached to talk

with Marguerita, who, when she saw the marchesa fully engaged, said in a low voice, that she had something she wished to ask him, if he could find an opportunity unobserved by the party. This he soon did, and she inquired if it was true that the Turkish admiral blockaded the harbour?

“ Perfectly so, signora,” he replied.

“ Then Heaven must be my protection,” she exclaimed, “ for here I cannot stay. I am placed in a most embarrassing situation, and slight as is my acquaintance with you, signor, you are the only person on whom I can rely, or of whom I can venture to ask a favour. Will you?—but first tell me, has any vessel sailed for Sicily since I came here ?”

“ Numbers; and strange have I thought it that you availed yourself of none of them to return.”

“ You might wonder, indeed,” she said; “ I have been most unhandsomely detained, and deceived by the manœuvres of don Giuglio d'Aguilar, and the careless indifference of the marchesa Villagiusta.”

Longer, I again repeat, I ought not, I must not remain here; will you aid me to escape?"

"I will certainly do every thing in my power; but you will tell me how you wish I shall act; shall I state the case to the grand master, or remonstrate privately with D'Aguilar upon the inhumanity and impropriety of his conduct?"

"Remonstrances," replied Marguerita, "would, I fear, only produce new stratagems to detain me; and I would not for the world injure either don Giuglio or his sister, or involve him in any thing unpleasant with the grand master; though I must escape from them now, I can never forget the kindness I have really received from them; under these circumstances, the more quietly we act the better."

Vauvillicrs still urged the plan he had at first proposed, as the most rational and practicable.—If D'Aguilar, he said, after his remonstrances, still detained her under any pretext whatever, it would be proper to apply to the grand master, which might

be done in such a manner as not to produce any unpleasant effect on the friends.

Marguerite was however not to be convinced, and persisted in wishing to escape in secret from her present captivity.

"But surely, my child, you will wait patiently till freedom comes the next birthday," said the stranger.

"That may be wrong."

"It may certainly, but the danger will be great; and if you are taken?"

"Signor Vauvilliers, I must risk any thing; I have waited so long in hopes of going safely, that I may not contemplate weeks more." Her agitation was uncontrollable, and she added—"It is decided to mention such a possibility; but to those who daily see the persecution I suffer from don Gaudio, my character must seem doubtful; and were my father's name through me to meet reproach, I could never see him more; the chance of slavery, or of death, is preferable; for pity's sake then aid me in escaping."

Vauvilliers considered for a moment;

the repugnance of Marguerita to allow him to apply to the superior power was not to be overcome, and he feared she might be driven to ask aid from others who would not be so faithful to her confidence.—“ If I can find any body,” he said at length, “ venturous enough to put to sea in the night, and endeavour to pass in the dark through the Turkish fleet, dare you accompany them? and can you escape from this house unperceived?”

“ For my own resolution I can answer: the window of my apartment is not too high to escape from, and any one who would undertake the enterprise, my father would reward to the utmost of his ability. And now we had better separate, for fear of observation; as soon as you have any information, write it to me, and I will take care to find you the means of giving me the paper.”

In a few days Vauvilliers called again at the marchesa's. Giuglio was in the room, and, as usual, kept so close to Marguerita, as to render it impossible for her



to exchange a whisper with any one unheard by himself, when Enrico Sforza, one of the young officers belonging to the galley under the command of D'Aguilar, arrived.

"The grand master," he said, "will require your attendance this evening, and we shall, I hope, be soon again in search of adventures, signor. Serican cannot long keep the seas, and every one knows your impatience to be in action."

"Then every one knows more than I do," said D'Aguilar; "I abhor the idea of motion, and would willingly resign any command, however tempting, which could be offered me."

"How unfortunate!" said Sforza; "for it was only this morning, I understand, that great interest was made to induce the grand master to send you to Barcelona, and from thence to Madrid, to bring back the emperor's concession of this island to the order; you will perhaps be delayed some months in Madrid; but your newly-

acquired taste for repose; and inaction will there be indulged to its utmost."

"The grand master might surely find some messenger better fitted to the office," observed D'Aguilar.

"So thought several ill-disposed persons," said Sforza; "but your friends, signor, have triumphed, and I understand you will be summoned to-night to receive your first instructions."

D'Aguilar seemed much out of humour, and being entirely off his guard, Vauvilliers took an opportunity, during the conversation, to desire Marguerita to be in her balcony alone, at the time the rosario sounded on that evening. To this she could only give a silent assent, and although she anxiously wished another moment's conversation, the vigilance of Giuglio rendered it impossible.

The day seemed longer even than any Marguerita had yet known in Malta; she watched the course of the sun with indelible impatience. Don Giuglio had

been summoned to attend the council and the marchers met at appointment at Civita Vecchia, a few miles distant from which it was with the utmost difficulty that she caused her governess from accompanying her; but at length her mother was persuaded to set forth without her, and Marguerite withdrew to her apartment, to wait for the communication of Vauvilliers.

Heavily did the time pass on as she sat with her eyes intently fixed on the distant ocean, which, like a chain around her, had kept her from relieving her father's anxious and despairing misery. What would be the event of her interview this evening, she knew not, but hoped that some plan had been devised by which she might escape from her present persecution and distress.

As she thought on the circumstances in which she was placed, she felt inspired with a resolution which would enable her to brave every danger, with a prospect of deliverance from thralldom. But when

she first heard the voice of the cavalier beneath her window, and the bells from the neighbouring churches announced the long-expected moment, she became incapable of either speech or action, and unable to move from her chair. Again she heard herself named in a gentle tone, and by a violent exertion hastened into the balcony.

“I have but a desperate remedy to offer, lady,” said Vauvilliers; “and can scarcely think that you will hazard it.”

“Any thing,” replied Marguerita, “that my strength can enable me to bear, I shall gladly undertake; tell me what it is?”

“The only vessels which leave the island are small scampavias, which occasionally endeavour to communicate with Cape Passaro; one sails, I understand, to-night, and I am perfectly prepared to attend you; but surely it will be better to wait some more favourable opportunity, and claim the protection of the grand master.”

“Your kind and generous offer, signor,

I must decline; but it must claim my eternal gratitude; it would be a useless trouble, and no safeguard to me from the dangers of the ocean. Heaven will be my guide and my protection, and safely confiding in such support, I would not lose the present time, which offers unusual facilities; the marchesa is at Civita Vecchia, and don Giuglio from home—let me instantly escape.”

“Alone and unattended, my child, I cannot let you go; it would be a breach of every law of humanity, a violation of every injunction of our order; my life shall gladly be resigned in your service, but I cannot abandon you, on the wide seas, to no other protection than the boatmen who navigate the frail bark in which we shall be obliged to venture.”

Marguerita still persisted in declining his offered attendance, urging its inutility, and her repugnance to make any one the companion of her flight; but it was in vain, Vauvilliers refused to aid in the fulfilment of her wishes, unless she accepted his escort, and

ing to depart, when her earnest  
 ion and tears induced him to re-  
 n; d ally, by her protestations  
 t sl w i sted endeavour to  
 su e : n to convey her  
 over, i uced to give his most re-  
 cor nt that she should depart  
 t t him; and left her for an hour, to  
 make such few arrangements for her com-  
 fort as the bark would admit, promising  
 to return at the expiration of that time,  
 and if she still maintained her resolution,  
 to conduct her on board; at the same time  
 exhorting her to consider the dangers to  
 which she would be exposed, without a  
 friend to aid and protect her.

As soon as the knight had departed,  
 Marguerita sat down to write her farewell  
 to the n chesa and her brother; in which  
 t lked them for the kind protection  
 t r l afforded her, and lamented the  
 s i had been compelled to adopt; a  
 feeli of regret passed over her mind as  
 f up this short adieu. She was  
 : ite obligations both to the

brother and sister. The gallant conduct of Giuglio, when he rescued her from the pirates, with his personal appearance and manners, might have made an impression upon her, but for the caution she had received from Vauvilliers, and the irrevocable engagements under which Giuglio was bound; and she felt a sensation of deeper regret, at the idea of seeing him no more, than she had before thought possible; but the remembrance of her father forcibly returned, and with it the claims of duty and decorum re-occupied her heart.

Except the dress she wore, all the presents of the marchesa, she deposited upon the couch, and wrapping a thick veil around her, knelt in supplication to the Virgin, for the strength and protection she so needed in her present hour of trial. The evening had closed in when Vauvilliers returned, and informed her that he had provided for her such accommodation as the miserable vessel afforded; that the padrone was a man of respectable charac-

ter, and willing to receive her on board; but at the same time, he said, he could not advise the dangerous experiment, nor feel happy at the idea of her departure without his protection.

Marguerita however was resolved upon encountering every difficulty, and firm in her refusal of his attendance, aware that should her fears allow her to involve another in any misfortune which might befall her, it would add to her sorrows, and could be no means of safety. The window of her chamber was only a short distance from the ground, which she easily reached with the assistance of her companion.

On her way to the boat, she could not but reflect that she was leaving a kind and hospitable roof, to commit herself to the hands of strangers, and men by nature and habit rude and uncultivated; that she was voluntarily about to venture in a frail bark, upon a midnight sea, and to explore her way through a fleet of hostile infidels; she shuddered at her own temerity, and might have listened to her fears



might perhaps have allowed them to overcome her impetuosity in view of the anxiety of her father - but when she thought upon the positive immorality of remaining in the house with her Gargina and the obloquy which might attach itself to her conduct, she resumed her undiminished resolution, and proceeded with Vauvilliers to the strand, where the boat awaited them. The padrone had engaged, on arriving in Sicily, to see her in safety to the nearest convent, from whence she could communicate to her father the news of her return.

With a heavy heart, after another fruitless attempt to overcome her repugnance to his accompanying her, Vauvilliers handed the fair fugitive on board, and giving her a large cloak to wrap her from the night air, deeply lamented the danger and inconvenience to which she was exposed, imploring with fervent devotion the protection and the blessing of Heaven upon her.

Marguerita, with tears, repeated her

thanks for his kindness, and wrapping the cloak around her, seated herself with patient resignation beneath the slight covering provided for her.

“By daybreak to-morrow, lady,” said the padrone, “we shall see the shores of Sicily. The wind is fair, and the Virgin will defend us from Il Giudeo and his galleys.”

He released the chain which held the vessel to the rock. Vauvilliers repeated his prayers for her security, and the shore began to recede from her sight through the gloom of night.

The moon rose late from the bosom of ocean, and its face was continually covered by the clouds which flitted over; the song of the boatmen ceased soon after they had left the land, and silently they proceeded through the dashing waves, lest any of the blockading squadron should be attracted by the sound of their voices. The sail was also taken down, to avoid the danger to which they might have been exposed, by the gleams of the moon being

reflected from it. Marguerite felt more secure from the unobstructed course they held for a considerable time, and began to anticipate the sight of her native shore.

"A sail!" exclaimed one of the boatmen. The sound attracted Marguerite, and directed it in moment to the source of happiness.

"Stand to the east," said the padrone: "I question if they are we."

The vessel held in its course, and they escaped observation: but a short time only elapsed before the same appalling sound was heard.

"Another sail ahead of us," said the boatman.

"San Francisco save us!" exclaimed the padrone: "we are in the clutches of El Gineco; yonder is another galley bearing down this way."—A cloud now passed over the moon, and all was dark. Marguerite sat in silent trepidation.—"If the moon was but obscured, we might still make our way through."

The prayers of the boatmen were audible, and the fair companion of their journey joined fervently in their petitions. The cloud soon flitted again from the descending orb, but its light still shewed them enough of their impending danger.

“Had we been one hour later,” said the sailor, “we had escaped from slavery.”

“They have not desried us yet,” said the padrone; “put the boat about, and stand off a while; the moon will soon go down, and we may escape.”

Another friendly cloud shrouded them again in darkness; but when it had passed over, they saw themselves cut off from retreat by an intervening galley. The moon shone brightly from its temporary screen. Marguerita saw with breathless terror the white sails spotting the ocean around them.

“A miracle alone can save us,” cried the padrone.

“My father! oh my father!” was the last thought of which the afflicted girl was

conscious. A bright flash from the nearest alley, and the thunder which followed, pronounced that they were seen and hailed. The boatmen abandoning their oars, gave themselves up to prayers and lamentations, and the bark floated at the mercy of the waves. The rushing of the approaching vessel through the waters, as she shed the foaming spray around her, was sounding in the ears of the terrified Maltese, and with an involuntary obedience they caught a rope thrown to them, and were received on board their captors. The whole party were ordered on the deck of the galley, and with a scream of terror, excited by the grasp of a dark and tanned sailor, Marguerita fainted, and was for some time unconscious of her hapless destiny.

When she awoke, it was without any remembrance of the scene in which she had been involved, but with a heavy sensation of misery upon her spirits. The first object which attracted her attention was a tall majestic figure, who appeared to

be regarding her with the deepest interest and anxiety.

"Be under no alarm, my child," he said; "you are with friends, who will render you every kindness and assistance."

Marguerita raised herself from the reclining posture in which she was supported, and looking at the person in whose arms she rested, she saw again a dark African countenance, overshadowed by a turban, and clasping her hands before her eyes, with a thrilling shriek, relapsed into insensibility.

Awakening from this second fainting, she saw the padrone of the boat in which she left Malta, whose countenance was now distorted by so ludicrous a mixture of terror and compassion, as would at any other time have excited mirth.

"Viva, madama!" said he, seeing her eyes unclosed; "for the love of San Francisco di Padua, recover, and save our lives."

"Be silent," said the person she had

before noticed, "and allow the lady to recover. You are with friends, signora," he added; "why thus distress yourself with groundless terrors?"

"I thought," said Marguerita, "we had been captured by Serican."

The person to whom she spoke smiled, and replied—"You have only exchanged your method of conveyance, signora, and shall be landed in Sicily as soon as an opportunity occurs; at present compose your spirits; the night is far advanced, endeavour to get some rest; we will retire, and if you wish for any thing in our power, it shall instantly be supplied."

"Tell me where I am, and with whom," said Marguerita.

"You are on board a vessel which offers better accommodation than the one you left, and shall be restored to your friends as soon as possible," said the gentleman; "endeavour, my child, to take the repose you need, and trust to my assurances of safety and protection."

She looked at the person who addressed her; there was something in his manner and appearance which inspired confidence but the terrified aspect of the Maltese he left the cabin, and an indistinct remembrance of the horrors which had first alarmed her, weighed still on the mind of the fair wanderer, and she tried in vain to compose her agitated feelings. She was placed on splendid cushions on the floor of what appeared to be the cabin of a large vessel. The magnificent carpet which covered the apartment, and the elegant lamp suspended from the ceiling gave her an idea of something above barbaric grandeur, and she tried to think she was recaptured by some Spanish ship in war. Still the turbaned attendant haunted her imagination. At length she sank into a state of torpid composure for a few hours; after which the same person who had before endeavoured to comfort her entered the cabin, which was now illuminated by the beams of the sun.

“ I hope you have had some rest,



ora," he said; "the fatigue and anxiety of last night quite overcame your spirits; you will, with returning strength, be more satisfied with the destiny which has made me your escort to your friends."

"To whom am I thus indebted?" asked Marguerita.

"What matters it by whom you are restored to your family?" replied the stranger; "I have engaged, as soon as it can be done, to land you on the Sicilian shore."

"Generous cavalier! I am indeed indebted to your kindness; but my terror at the idea of falling into the hands of that monster Serican had bereft me of my senses."

The stranger smiled again, and assured her that she was safe, for the present, from any monster, whether infidel or Christian.

Marguerita now recovered in some degree her spirits and her strength, and conversed with her new friend with cheerfulness and pleasure; she informed him of

her short and eventful history, of the seizure of her person by the Tunisian corsairs, the rescue which don Giuglio so fortunately effected, his subsequent persecution, and her escape from Malta to avoid him, and to relieve the anxious distress under which she knew her father laboured.

When she mentioned that dear and only friend, the tears forced their way down her cheeks, and she wept in agony at the thoughts of his sufferings.—“The terror which I experienced last night,” she said, “when conveyed on board your vessel, signor, cannot be described; for the mysterious horrors I have heard of this Turkish chief, had filled me with such apprehension, that I think it would be impossible to survive really encountering him; for the kind Providence which has placed me under your protection, I never can be sufficiently grateful.”

“That you were on your way to join your father, signora, I had learned from the boatmen who were conveying you;

but who he is, or where he may be found, I am still ignorant."

"Vincentio Landolini is his name," said Marguerita; "a name connected with some of the noblest families in Sicily, and probably he is still near Trapani, from whence I was carried off."

"It is fortunate," replied her friend, "that we are now on the western side the island, for I presume you would not find it difficult to make your way from Girgenti, or Marsala, to Trapani, which are probably the nearest ports we shall make."

"On any spot in Sicily," she replied, "I should feel no fears of meeting with some means of communication with my father."

"I will then take the earliest opportunity of landing you upon your native shore; but you have taken no refreshment—forgive my inattention." Saying which he hastily withdrew from the cabin, and left the lady to her solitary meditations.

Who this stranger could be, Marguerita knew not; his dress was not that of a

European, nor did it resemble the ruffian who had at first seized her. He wore no turban on his brow, but a high cap of splendid materials, equally unlike the costume of the corsairs and that of the warriors she had been accustomed to behold. His courteous manners, and his promise to land her on the Sicilian shore, persuaded her he was not a barbarian chief. His accent, though neither Spanish nor Italian, was that of one well versed in the purer language of Italy; but, above all, the benignity of his treatment to herself convinced her she was in the hands of a Christian in alliance with the sovereign of Sicily.

The Maltese padrone entered the room with coffee and refreshments.

Marguerita looked anxiously at his countenance, and asked—"Who is our generous friend?"

"Signora!" said the man, in a tone of terror and surprise.

"Who is the commander of this vessel?"

“Jesu Maria save your sweet senses, lady!” ejaculated the Maltese.

Marguerita was astonished at his conduct, in which she had not before seen any thing extraordinary; and taking some of the offered viands, the man asked if he might leave them and retire?

“Certainly, if you wish it,” she replied; “but I am anxious to know what vessel we are on board, and who commands.”

The Maltese stood for an instant undecided what to do, when the door opened, and her former friend told the man he might retire; he hesitated, and asked with some trepidation—“Has your excellenza a doctor on board?”

“A doctor! for whom and what?”

“For the poor signora, whose senses are gone with the fright.”

The cavalier looked at Marguerita and at the padrone with an inquisitive air of surprise.

“My wish to be informed to whom I was indebted for this kind treatment,”

said the lady, "has, it appears, excited this alarm in my former conductor."

The parties gazed on each other, and none knew how to proceed.

"Who could have supposed," at length said the padrone, "that madonna did recognise in your excellenza the Serican?"

Marguerita sat pale and immovable as a statue.

"I had ventured to hope," said the bassa, "that when my dreaded name was announced, the promises I had already made would have quieted your fears, madam. It is true that I am Serican, a Turkish chief, of whom report has conveyed so terrible a description to your ears. I can only assure you, that such as you have found me while unknown, you shall find me still; you have not fallen again into the hands of barbarian robbers but are under the protection of an Osman bassa, who pledges his word, as a Moslem and a warrior, to restore your safety to your father and your country."



ready met with at your hands demands my gratitude, and ensures my reliance on you for the future."

"I shall endeavour," answered Serican, "to meet your wishes, and to repay your confidence in all things. I am now cruising with my fleet off the western coast of Sicily, and will take an early opportunity to land you under a flag of truce at some convenient port."

A noise on deck attracted the admiral's attention, and an officer appeared at the cabin-door to announce a sail in sight; Serican prevented him from entering, and requesting Marguerita to command whatever she wished for, withdrew to attend the proceedings above.

A considerable noise was heard, and a sound of artillery at a little distance. The anxious damsel trembled at the idea of another combat, but a shout from the deck, and a cessation of the firing, soon relieved her; and Serican immediately appeared to quiet her alarms, and informed her that one of the advanced galleys had just cap-



tured a small vessel making towards the Sicilian coast.

“ We shall now stand up to her,” he said, “ in order to ascertain who and what she is ; I may be some time detained on deck ; in the meantime, your Maltese attendants wait your commands. I have prohibited all others from approaching this cabin, which henceforth you will consider as your own apartment.”

On board the captured bark was the baron Solanto; himself and his principal attendants were immediately removed to the admiral's ship, where he met with the generous reception which Serican's noble spirit was always forward to pay to a brave man whom fortune had placed in his power.

He learned the state of distress and anxiety into which the baron's family would be thrown by his non-arrival in Sciacca, and kindly acceded to the proposal of putting into the port of that city, and treating with count Luna for the ransom of his captive, that he might be spared

a voyage to some Turkish port, and wife and daughter relieved from their fears at his delay.

In Sciacca, too, Serican had hoped to fulfil his charitable intention of forwarding Marguerita to her friends; but in all expectations he was nearly disappointed by the insulting conduct of count La With. With don Giacomo Perollo, the ne Ottoman felt a confidence inspired by liberal and open conduct, and to him resigned both his fortunate captives. The charm of Marguerita's manners had, though she had been on board so few days, endeared her to the bassa with almost a parental regard, and he parted from them with more regret than their short intimacy might have been expected to excite.

CHAPTER VI.  
~~~~~

Par sa mère élevé, nourri dans ses maximes,
Il n'était point, comme elle, endurcit dans les crimes.

HENRIADE.

As the return of the baron Solanto removed all anxiety from the mind of the baroness, it immediately restored her to her accustomed health and spirits; but as the family felt that a separate residence would be most comfortable, and leave them most at liberty, it was agreed to make the late indisposition of the baroness a reason for placing her directly in a house of her own, where she could be more quiet and independent than at Luna Castle; and as the celebrated baths of Sciacca were situated in a beautiful valley, at a short distance from the city, the baron determined to take a cassino in their vicinity.

If Costanza ultimately married count Luna, her father and mother wished to remain near her when the baron was not on service; and if any thing occurred to prevent the union taking place, they would be more easy any where than at his house.

In the society of his wife and child; the baron had forgotten the extraordinary reception he had met with from don Sigismund; his immediate inquiries for his family, and the interposition of Adriano, had made it pass at the time; but still there was something, on recollecting the circumstances, which Solanto could not but think inexplicable.

After the first effusions of joy at their reunion, the baroness gave an account of their visit to Palermo, and the kindness of their viceregal friends; mentioned Federico Perollo, and the pleasant discovery she had made of his mother being her old friend Victoria Moncada. She related their accident near Castel Vetrano, and the providential meeting with and gallantry of

Perollo and Pigmentelli: passing lightly over the rencontre in the church, and the ill-humour of the countess Calabellotta.

Costanza was unwilling to interrupt her mother; besides which, her present happiness made her feel more leniently both towards the countess and don Sigismund, by whose exertions she had no doubt but her father had been released from his unpleasant situation.

The baron listened with attention and interest, and when the detail was concluded, he said—"I find my debts to the house of Perollo are more numerous than I suspected; and I think I feel even more obliged by the kindness shewn to you than for my own liberation."

An exclamation of surprise from Costanza was excited by the discovery that to Perollo, and not to count Luna, she was indebted for the restoration of her father. The baroness had not yet been informed of her husband's captivity, and eagerly requested to hear the particulars of his unexpected delay.

When informed of all the circumstances, she could only raise her hands to Heaven in silent gratitude for his deliverance. But Costanza did not refrain from wishing openly, that the baron Pandolfina's courtesy and liberality of sentiment, were not so powerfully contrasted by the violent tempers and narrow prejudices of don Sigismund and his mother.

The baron looked at his daughter as if for an explanation; but the baroness prevented it, by saying—"Hush, my child! the unpleasant manners of the countess are not worth remembering; and for the count, he is young, and will improve."

"I hope he may, my dear mother; but it is so proper that my father should be perfectly acquainted with the manner and temper of both of them, that ere long I must beg his permission to relate all the events which have occurred since our arrival."

"I will willingly hear all my Costanza wishes to tell me," he replied; then to the baroness he added, "but I must now go

and see count Luna, to whom I have hardly spoken; to-morrow I shall visit Perollo, to shew at once that I will be involved in no party feuds."

"I am truly glad to hear you so determine," said the baroness, "and Costanza and I will accompany you."

"That shall be just as you may wish," said Solanto, and left the apartment.

Solanto found count Luna, his mother, and Adriano, apparently engaged in an interesting debate.—"My anxiety," he said, "to see my family, made me forgetful of the attentions due to my noble host; permit me now, with unfeigned affection, to embrace the son of my much-esteemed friend, count Luna."

"From me, signor, the apology ought to come; I was deficient in those regards which, had I been myself, I should have paid to so honoured a guest. My despair at the rude repulse I had met with from the pirate chief, and the conviction I had just received of his connivance with our

direct enemy Perollo, had for the moment bereft me of the power of action."

"Some false intelligence has misled you, count Luna," replied Solanto. "From my noble captor, the bassa Serican, I learned the cause of your rejected application to have been a failure on your part of the ceremony due to the admiral of the Ottoman fleet; and for the baron Pandolfina, malignant must be the man who could have intimated that his conduct was other than bounteous and honourable; and that it involved no disrespect to your lordship, I will vouch my life and reputation. But come, count Sigismund, these party feuds, I hope, will be allayed ere long. Allow me the honour of an introduction to your friends."

"My mother," said Sigismund, presenting him to the countess, "and don Geronimo Peralta, baron Adriano."

"To the widow of my friend," said Solanto, "I hope no other introduction is necessary than my regard for him."

“Which is shewn,” said the countess, ‘by insulting us with the history of the virtues of his deadly foe, the accursed *Giacomó Perollo*.’”

Solanto stood confounded at this return to his civility.—“If to acknowledge with eternal gratitude the favours I have received from baron Pandolfina be a crime, I fear I shall be found an obstinate offender.”

“Perhaps, when your excellenza has learned all the secret springs from whence this action of the Perollo was derived, you may find motives to change the high opinion you have formed of him,” replied *Adriano*, interposing to arrest the current of the lady’s anger, just ready to pour forth.

“The wisdom of those who would find motives discreditable to my deliverer’s character,” answered Solanto, “must be such as I should find it difficult to comprehend, and be most unwilling to attend to. I trust count Luna more justly appreciates the generosity even of his foes.”

The shouts of the populace attending Pandolfina and the rescued prisoners, and the cries of "Viva il Perollo!" now reached their ears; Luna started, and turned pale; the countess stamped with rage, and imprecating a frightful malediction on don Giacomo and all his friends, rushed from the apartment.

"Are they coming hither to repeat their insults?" said Sigismund, tremulous with passion.

An attendant announced the arrival of the baron Solanto's retinue, who had been brought on shore by Pandolfina.

"With your permission, signor," said Solanto, "let them enter." Before the count could reply, the men had made their way into the room.

"This is another proof of the noble treatment we have met with," said the baron.

"Viva il Perollo!" exclaimed one of the men; "long life to the generous don Giacomo, and confusion to his enemies!"

Luna rushed forward, and seizing the

seizer by the collar, dashed him to the ground, and had drawn his poniard, when the baron and Adriano wrung it from his grasp.

"This intemperate violence, signor," said Solanto, "is the frenzy of a madman, not the anger of a gentleman."

"You too," said the furious Sigismund, "must be one of Perollo's agents, thus to insult the spirit of Luna and Peralta; but even I may rouse at last, and when I do, my deep revenge will not be satiated by a trifling sacrifice."

"At present, count Luna," answered Solanto, calmly, "you are too much agitated to attend to reason or remonstrance. You may withdraw," he said to the attendants, and when they had retired, he added—"This effervescence of anger and violence, signor, is such as augurs ill for the happiness of any one connected with me by the ties of marriage; my engagements are at present only conditional, and must rejoice to think they are so."

"The agitation under which count

Luna's spirits have suffered during the day," said Adriano, " must plead for him with your excellenza ; so deep was the interest he took in your deliverance, that the repulse he met with nearly deprived him of reason. The fortunate event being afterwards produced by means so adverse to his wishes, has prevented him from recovering his equanimity of temper ; believe me he will, when reflection has restored him to himself, as deeply deprecate your just anger as you yourself could wish."

Don Sigismund stood during this conversation leaning against the side of the room, his face shrouded in his mantle, and his body convulsed by agitation.

" For the present," continued Adriano, " allow me to withdraw with him till he is more composed, when I am well convinced he will obtain your pardon for this unfortunate ebullition of passion."

" I am too deeply interested in count Luna's disposition," replied Solanto, " to forget the scene which has just passed, but will at present form no rash or sudden

solution. He immediately retired, leaving Adriano to endeavour to restore count Luna to a sense of the impropriety and danger of such conduct.

They both remained some time without speaking. Sigismund paced the room restlessly, and Peralta seated himself to wait an interval of returning composure.

At length the count paused, and exclaimed—"Must I submit to be insulted even here by the slaves whom Giacomo Perollo has purchased for the purpose? Am I to be threatened with the loss of my betrothed bride, because I crouch not to insult and oppression? let the baron disavow his league himself with my enemies, have power and strength to crush them all, and force them to fulfil their contract."

"There is, I doubt, one opposing power; your lordship cannot bend, and without which all your exertions will be made in vain."

"And who is it," said Luna, fiercely,

“that dares the united powers of our house, when called forth to action?”

“The spirit of Costanza di Solanto,” replied Peralta. “I marked the cool contempt with which she repelled your mother’s anger in the church, and the decided resistance she offered to your wishes in conducting forth the baroness. Your excellency must pursue another course to gain the lady and her dower. Your late violence has, I fear, disgusted the baron, and it will require all our exertions to obliterate it from his memory.”

“And would you, Adriano, have listened tamely to the contumelious insult of the slave?”

“A future time should have revenged his crime,” said the baron; “his unthinking tongue might have been silenced in a fitter place, and by a surer hand; why drive Solanto forcibly to seek Perollo’s friendship? unless you now appease him, we shall find him ranged under the banners of our enemies, and a transfer of his

daughter's hand made to the son of Giacomo."

"To what act of desperation is it you would hurry me, Peralta?"

"To none," replied his counsellor; "I would have you temporise with all, till you have gained your point; I would have you sooth Solanto's indignation, and ensure his heiress as your bride; if necessary, I would have you even court Perollo; and when all is done, and this increase of wealth and power secured to your family, then throw off the mask, call forth the strength of all your friends, and by one glorious extermination, wipe from the earth every soul whose veins contain one drop of the Perollo blood. Thus shall we redress our long-continued train of injuries and insults, and complete our great revenge."

"Revenge!" exclaimed the countess, entering the apartment; "if Sigismund di Luna felt as the head of his illustrious race should feel, his every thought would

centre in revenge. Is this a time for love and revelry, when even in our castle we are insulted by the friends of the Perollo? must I stand by and hear my husband's name polluted by the friendship of Giacomo's redeemed adherent? This baron Solanto, who boasts his gratitude and high respect to that detested wretch, is in our power. Were I the chief of Luna, to-night should seal his fate, and to-morrow's sun see his daughter mine by force."

"I only argue for delay," said Adriano, "that our deeds of vengeance may be full; we are not yet prepared for open war; all that I urge is time to complete such preparations as may ensure us full success, and leave no scion of Perollo to hand their hated name to other ages."

"Why not begin with this Solanto, this slave redeemed by Giacomo; crush by his death their growing intimacy, secure his daughter and her portion, and no longer temporise with this execrable race?"

"The wealth and power of baron So-

lanto," observed Adriano, "are not yet sufficiently in count Luna's grasp; when they are, I will no longer endeavour to suspend his fate, or restrain the noble ardour of my chief for vengeance and redress."

"How would you have me act?" asked Luna.

"Try, by every method of conciliation, to assure the baron of your repentance, for the hasty sally he witnessed, win the affection of his daughter, and her consent to an immediate union, and as soon as circumstances will permit, remove the only obstacle to full possession by Solanto's death."

"Again, Peralta, the same dark course of treachery and murder. I will not stain my hands by any such nefarious crimes; I would gladly immolate the last of the Perollo race to the remembrance of our injuries, but it must be in fair and open war. For the baron Solanto, he was my father's friend; he is, I hope, the parent of my future spouse; would you have the

chief of Luna and Peralta a mercenary parricide? no; by every tie his life is sacred; and if by his fall alone our purposes of vengeance could be procured, I would resign them all."

"Then turn Franciscan; unite the hands of Federico Perollo and Costanza di Solanto, and leave the world a lasting monument of the degenerate weakness of count Luna," said his mother. "This poor effeminate dislike to follow a bold, decisive course, will shew every one how justly the Perollo claims the merit of superior spirit. I have loved thee, Sigismund, with such fond devotion, that my existence hangs but on your life and honour; but did I think you capable of foregoing for an instant the glorious path of vengeance I have pointed out, or hesitating to sacrifice ten thousand such as this Solanto, nay, even your dearest friends, to fulfil the noble destiny that awaits you, I could myself, with indignation and abhorrence, equal only to the love I have borne you, plunge a stiletto in your heart,

and blast your name with everlasting infamy."

"There is no occasion," replied Adriano, "for this vehemence, signora; the question of Solanto's life or death is immaterial to our great design; he must at present be appeased, and the count must condescend to sooth him by every promise and profession he may think proper to demand. But here comes the peace-making Geronimo Ferrara; a better emissary we cannot have; his hypocritical harangues must now be rendered useful to our purpose; have I your permission to engage his services?"

"Do even as you will," replied Sigismund.

"I like not such half-measures, and detest this canting fool," said the countess, and withdrew as Geronimo entered.

"I came, signor," he said, "to rejoice with you on the arrival of your friend, and to beg to be allowed to offer my sincere congratulations."

Don Sigismund bowed in silence.

"In good time are you come, signor Geronimo," said Adriano, "to use your powers of conciliation. Untoward events have ruffled the spirits of the count to-day, and he has unintentionally offended the baron Solanto; will you be the bearer of his most humble apology?"

"You are going too far, baron Adriano," interrupted Sigismund; "signor Ferrara will oblige me by stating my regret at the violence into which I was betrayed, but by which I intended no disrespect towards the baron, and therefore hope to be forgiven."

"Leave it to don Geronimo," replied Adriano; "he will, I know, say only what is proper, and be the willing messenger of your repentance."

"I expected not to be employed in such an office here," answered don Geronimo; "but count Luna may in weightier things command my services. At present, however, I am ignorant even of the nature of the fault for which I am to plead forgiveness."

“It was a misunderstanding with the baron,” said Peralta, “respecting the interference of Perollo in his deliverance from the Turk; and the count resented, too hastily perhaps, the ignorant zeal of one of Solanto’s attendants.”

“Oh that this party strife were at an end!” replied Ferrara; “that two such noble dispositions as those of count Luna and Pandolfina should be so ignorant of each other’s estimable qualities!”

“This is a subject we need not now discuss,” said Peralta; “some future time, I trust, will see these evils remedied, and the houses of Luna and Perollo no longer rivals; believe me, my endeavours shall not be wanting towards effecting this most desirable event, signor Ferrara; but at present let us use our efforts to heal this breach, which makes the count so unhappy.”

“I will most willingly do my utmost,” said Geronimo.

“The count and myself,” added Adriano, “will retire, and when your persuasions have succeeded, as I doubt not but they will, we may bring the parties together to

complete their reconciliation. I will cause the baron to be informed of your attendance."

Count Sigismund and Adriano then withdrew, and the latter desired the baron Solanto might be told, that a friend of the count requested the honour of an interview.

Solanto immediately followed the messenger, and was conducted to the presence of Ferrara, whose prepossessing figure inspired him with involuntary respect, and the cordial warmth with which he greeted him, demanded his gratitude, and conciliated his regard.

"My first intention," said Ferrara, "in visiting the castle to-day, was to congratulate count Luna on the safe arrival of his friend the baron Solanto; and I have now received from him instructions to assure your excellenza of his deep regret at the unpleasant circumstances which have occurred, and to beg that you will in charity forgive his impetuosity, and forget that the irritation of the moment betrayed him into so unwarrantable an act of violence."

"I regret," replied Solanto, "that to such an intercessor I cannot concede in all things; but too much is now at stake in my daughter's future happiness, to allow me to forget the display count Sigismund has made of his intemperate anger."

"Count Sigismund, signor," answered Ferrara, "is young and impetuous; his feelings easily excited, and with difficulty restrained; but he is generous, kind, affectionate, and sincere; he does most penitently acknowledge his error, and with the respect he feels for your opinion, and desire for your friendship, I think, I may venture to say, that the lesson he has now received will preserve him from many repetitions of such excesses."

"It is to the future conduct of the count, signor, that I must look for the sincerity of his sorrow; I am ready and willing to allow for his irritated feelings, and the impetuosity of his temper; but I cannot, till further proof of his good disposition, entrust the happiness of my child to him."

"But you will for the past," replied don Geronimo, "accept the count's excuses, and look to his future conduct only for the opinion you may form of his character."

"So far, signor, I will concede to your friendly interposition."

"Accept my thanks," said Ferrara: "how gladly would I bring the feuds between the rival houses of Luna and Perollo to the same conclusion! both the count and baron Pandolfina possess qualities and virtues which, under any other names, they would cheerfully acknowledge and sincerely respect. The slightest conciliation on the part of count Luna would even now, I think, make don Giacomo his friend; but such principles have been assiduously imprinted on the mind of the former from his earliest youth, as have made him, without any fault of his own, incapable of admitting any feelings of amity towards the house of Perollo. Under the mild influence of an amiable wife, much might be hoped from his na-

turally-good disposition; as yet he has had none about him who have really wished to promote this desirable reconciliation : but I am delaying to inform him of your acceptance of his apologies, and compose his mind upon the subject."

Don Geronimo withdrew, and soon returned with Sigismund and Adriano.

"I am indebted," said the former, "both to signor Ferrara's kind intercession, and your generous forgiveness, baron Solanto, of the unintentional violence of which I was guilty."

"Let it be no more remembered, but as a warning for the future," replied Solanto; "and now let me beg your information on the subject of a residence for myself and family."

"I had hoped," said Sigismund, "that my father's friend, I fear I must not yet say mine, would have honoured me by making my house his home during his stay in Sciacca."

"Believe me," replied the baron, "I am fully sensible of your kindness and hos-

pitality ; but I find the baroness has not been quite well, and would like to be near the baths ; and in case we should ultimately be more nearly connected, I think it better for Costanza to be in her father's house than her lover's. And though we shall not be exactly your guests, we shall hope you will consider us most closely united to you by every tie of friendship and regard ; and that you will be as much with us as your inclination and engagements will permit."

Luna tried still to persuade the baron to remain with him, but could not, and at last yielded to his having a separate home. On considering about residences, he said—"There are several cassinos in the neighbourhood, which are often used by persons visiting the baths ; and if your excellenza will leave the affair to me, I will endeavour to learn to-morrow what houses are disengaged, and how you can be accommodated, though by so doing I shall deprive myself of a long-anticipated pleasure."

“ I will leave it then entirely to you, and will myself go to-morrow, with the baroness and Costanza, to pay our respects to the baron Pandolfina.”

The count started and turned pale, but suppressed his rising anger, and said, in a hurried tone—“ If her excellenza is not quite well, she had better not be exposed to any fatigue, and donna Costanza will not surely go without her.”

“ Though the baroness is not quite as strong as I would have her, still I hope she is not ill; and they are both eager to express their gratitude for the attentions we have received.”

The count appeared contending with his feelings, when Adriano made some remark about the baths, and diverted the conversation to another course. Don Gerónimo joined in it; and, after some time, the party separated, apparently forgetful of the disagreeable events which had occurred at their former interview. Solanto was much better satisfied with count Luna, and pleased with the mildness and con-

ciliating manners of Ferrara; but with regard to Adriano, there was an appearance of art which he could not conceal, and upon which the baron could not reflect, without sensations of dislike and distrust.

When Luna and Adriano were again in private, the latter observed—"Your excellenza exceeded my hopes; and must, I think, have removed from the mind of the baron every unpleasant remembrance of what had passed; a little self-command will win him to our wishes; his daughter and his wealth will be yours, and the fate of Perollo will hang upon your word."

"I would that this visit could be prevented," said Luna, "or at least that Costanza could be withheld from going."

"Any such attempt would be useless, and therefore I think impolitic," replied Adriano; "no opposition being made by you, will convince Solanto of your moderation and temper: we must hereafter try to embroil the parties, and undermine
r good understanding. It will be no

CONSIDERABLE TALK OF THE NEW METHOD OF
 TAKING THE VIBRATIONS OF THE AIR-
 WAVE ITSELF, ALSO OF THE PROGRESS OF
 THE NEW AND IMPROVED SYSTEM OF
 THE NEW AND IMPROVED SYSTEM OF
 THE NEW AND IMPROVED SYSTEM OF
 THE NEW AND IMPROVED SYSTEM OF
 THE NEW AND IMPROVED SYSTEM OF
 THE NEW AND IMPROVED SYSTEM OF
 THE NEW AND IMPROVED SYSTEM OF

"I WOULD BE GLAD TO SEE YOU
 VISITING TO THE NEW METHOD OF
 TAKING THE VIBRATIONS OF THE AIR-
 WAVE ITSELF, ALSO OF THE PROGRESS OF
 THE NEW AND IMPROVED SYSTEM OF
 THE NEW AND IMPROVED SYSTEM OF
 THE NEW AND IMPROVED SYSTEM OF
 THE NEW AND IMPROVED SYSTEM OF
 THE NEW AND IMPROVED SYSTEM OF
 THE NEW AND IMPROVED SYSTEM OF

"I WOULD BE GLAD TO SEE YOU
 VISITING TO THE NEW METHOD OF
 TAKING THE VIBRATIONS OF THE AIR-
 WAVE ITSELF, ALSO OF THE PROGRESS OF
 THE NEW AND IMPROVED SYSTEM OF
 THE NEW AND IMPROVED SYSTEM OF
 THE NEW AND IMPROVED SYSTEM OF
 THE NEW AND IMPROVED SYSTEM OF
 THE NEW AND IMPROVED SYSTEM OF
 THE NEW AND IMPROVED SYSTEM OF
 THE NEW AND IMPROVED SYSTEM OF

LORD REMAINED SOME TIME IN SILENCE

"WAS NOT THAT AN ADDRESS OF LORD
 BARNARD?" ASKED PERKINS "WHO PASSED BY
 IN THE GALLERY?"

"I BELIEVE IT WAS: ACCORDING TO THE
 HAD MANY COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE
 THERE: SOME ARRANGEMENTS, PERHAPS, RESPECT-
 ING THE PROPERTY OF THEIR KINSMAN, OLD
 LUCHESE, HIS UNCLE: AT LEAST SUCH I SUP-
 POSE IT TO BE."

"We shall see D'Amato soon in Sciacca, I presume," said Adriano.

"Probably we may; but he is little seen, and mixes, as you know, but rarely in the society of the citizens here."

"There are few more devotedly attached to our house," said Adriano, "or who are more inveterate foes to the Perollo."

"He is, I believe, a sincere and zealous friend," answered Luna; "but I sometimes wish his plans were less mysterious and sanguinary."

"In all things," replied Peralta, "he will be found a firm supporter of our cause; his sword is never backward to revenge the insults of the house of Luna."

The conversation was here interrupted, and the remainder of the evening was passed very pleasantly to all the party.

The Solanto family were received the next day at the Casa di Perollo, with a cordiality and kindness which made them feel at once among friends; and the exchange from the gloomy state of Luna

Castle made the cheerful air of Pandolfina's magnificent establishment even more than commonly attractive to strangers.

The baron Solanto found in don Giacomo the enlightened understanding and suavity of manners, for which he had so often heard him remarked; and the baroness saw in madame Pandolfina all that she remembered so dignified, so endearing, and delightful, in Victoria Moncada.

The facility with which young people get acquainted, soon led Marguerita and Costanza into close conversation. Federico stood by them, unwilling to treat Costanza as a mere casual visitor, and unable, from consciousness of feeling more deeply than he ought, to claim the privileges of his longer acquaintance; yet he was so happy to see her in Perollo Castle, that to every one but herself he talked with even more than his usual life and animation.

In the course of conversation, the baroness Pandolfina asked Solanto if he

intended making Luna Castle his home while in Sciacca ?

“ If,” he answered, “ I could have prevailed on myself to do any thing previous to paying my respects here, I should have been now in search of a residence for ourselves, where we can independently see all our friends. I think I shall prefer the vicinity of the baths ; the situation I understand is good for hunting, of which I am perhaps a little too fond ; and by not being quite in the city, I shall be more able to choose my society, which, as I may probably in future be much here, will be a great point in comfort.”

“ Will you allow me,” said Pandolfina, “ to offer you a cassino which I have ; it is particularly well situated in the valley where the springs rise ?”

“ I doubt,” replied Solanto, “ I must, in this instance, decline your kindness ; for my friend don Sigismund is so jealous of my being obliged to any one but himself, that in this I must indulge him, and

leave the arrangement of every thing to him."

Don Giacomo smiled, and said—"I can well imagine that count Luna would not particularly wish any of his friends to be obliged to me; perhaps I should feel something of the same sort myself; but I shall more than ever execrate his advisers, if they make this unhappy feud into an annoyance to you."

"Do you not think, don Giacomo," said the baroness Solanto, "that the liberated captives, and those to whom happiness has been restored with them, ought to give some public demonstration of their gratitude to Heaven for its interposition in their behalf?"

"Most certainly, madam; but as the cavalier Landolini must not be omitted, we had better, perhaps, not determine what we shall do till after his arrival; when he comes, I will let you know, and we will then arrange every thing according to your wishes."

Marguerita expressed her gratitude to

could not but see in him, should be so evidently the very best of his party ; that his mother, instead of softening his temper, used every means in her power to inflame it, and to subdue every amiable feeling in him ; and that instead of repairing to her, in any degree, the absence of her own indulgent parents, she would be to her a perpetual object of disgust and terror—she felt that she had not courage to become the wife of Sigismund.

She looked on the countenance of her mother, and thought that however much she had loved her before, it was only now that she appreciated the meekness of spirit which was her peculiar characteristic ; she had sometimes thought she wanted energy to repel the injuries to which mildness and slowness to take offence sometimes expose their possessors ; but now that she saw pride, violence, and unyielding self-love, without the veil of politeness and grace, which frequently blinds us to their natural deformity, she wondered how she ever tolerated such qualities, and felt

her cheeks glow at recollecting how nearly her own high spirit had approached to haughtiness, and how closely what she had considered noble independence of opinion was allied to self-love and conceit.

In every pause of thought, her memory would wander back to the Casa di Perollo, and of all the persons in the pleasing family-picture, Federico was still the most prominent. Costanza is a young, lovely, and amiable woman; but as she was a human being, she was not perfect. Women are usually not slow in perceiving the impressions they make, and the interest they excite; their great advantage is quickness of perception; their reverse, want of steadiness, and liability to be diverted from one object to another.

Thus it was that Costanza, though she said to herself that Federico Perollo could never be any thing to her, still did not feel displeased at his evident admiration. She thought don Sigismund the handsomer of the two; and there would be something very flattering in softening such

a temper, and influencing such a stubborn will ; but still she could not help comparing him with Perollo, and in the comparison count Luna always lost.

As Costanza was not without common sense, and had been educated by a mother, whose cool imagination and nice sense of propriety and delicacy peculiarly fitted her for the task, there was no danger of her fancying herself in love, upon such slight grounds, or that because Perollo evidently admired her, he would be wretched to see her given to another, or tormented by lasting regrets. Still she did not recollect, that while there remained the least chance of her becoming the wife of count Luna, she was doing wrong to encourage any comparison to his disadvantage.

CHAPTER IV

THE BARON'S DAUGHTER, who had been
 sitting with him in the study, rose
 and went to the door. She had been
 waiting for some time, and she
 had seen the baron's daughter
 enter the room. She had seen her
 enter the room, and she had seen
 her enter the room.

The baron's daughter, who had been
 sitting with him in the study, rose
 and went to the door. She had been
 waiting for some time, and she
 had seen the baron's daughter
 enter the room. She had seen her
 enter the room, and she had seen
 her enter the room. The baron's
 daughter, who had been sitting with
 him in the study, rose and went to
 the door. She had been waiting for
 some time, and she had seen the
 baron's daughter enter the room.

The baron seated himself without
 regard to the lady, and as she arrived the

door, observed—"You do well, madam, to guard against the curiosity of those about you; had you always acted with so much caution, I had never thought of seizing your confidant, nor made myself the arbiter of your destiny."

"How long will the unhappy Pietro linger in his hopeless confinement?" asked the countess.

"Spite of your prayers, madam, he may live many years; so necessary a witness is sure to be well attended, in case I should find it politic to expose your dark acts of murder and——"

"Hush! hush! you know the fatal secret, and I need no repetition of your information."

"Well, madam, my eternal silence is to be purchased by your compliance with my demand; sign an order to the abbess of Santa Caterina to deliver into my hands the lady Francisca, publicly acknowledge her rank, resign the portion which belongs to her, and the head of Pietro shall be a

nuptial present from your kinsman, Della Bardia."

"I have already, at your request," said the countess, "prohibited the completion of her vows; why not take this earnest of my future intentions, and give up the pledges you hold? All I wish is to secure the marriage of count Sigismund with the heiress of Solanto; and were the existence of Francisca known, her claims might break off the treaty, and destroy the future prospects of my son. I have promised that Francisca shall be your wife, but why insist on my proclaiming her birth and origin? her dower shall be paid; the money this Costanza brings will make the sacrifice of less importance; but do not, signor, drive me to this open declaration; do not impede this union, so beneficial to our family."

"Della Bardia, signora, does not intend to take a nameless bride, nor does he feel inclined to trust your excellenza's word; were I disposed to resign the power I pos-

sess over your high spirit, I might expect the fate I should so justly merit, and some confidant, like Pietro, would be found to help me on the way by which——”

“I will not be insulted by this insolence, signor barone,” said the lady, impatiently interrupting him; “were I to brave you to a disclosure, I have friends, whose influence and high authority would bear me through, despite of your accusations.”

Della Bardia replied only by an insulting laugh.

“And,” she added, “your witnesses, I might assert, are only slaves suborned to aid your malice and revenge.”

“By an order under your own hand, lady, I procured from the abbess of Santa Caterina certain records, which, if produced, would cover with eternal shame all those who are concerned in the dark proceeding to which they relate. I have myself experienced the severity of Giacomo Perollo; think you not that he would assist in laying before the viceroy the documents which are

in my power? and for the high connections of your excellency, it may possibly happen that the influence of pope Clement would be exerted rather to punish, than conceal the evil deeds I might disclose. But I wish not to urge you to this desperate trial; I propose to you no disgraceful alliance; your kinsman, Della Bardiz, is no improper match even for Francisca."

"Francisca," answered the countess, "is bent on taking the veil, and an exertion of all our power will be required to restrain her; why compel me to the cruelty of forcing her inclinations?"

"The tenderness of the countess Calta-bellotta may well be an obstacle to my wishes," said the barone, with a sneer; "she who for sixteen years has immured her victim in such a convent as that of Santa Caterina. I tell you, signora, I will be obeyed, and instantly."

"You must then issue your commands to some tamer spirit than that which Maria di Luna possesses: malignant vil-

lain ! what demon prompted your detested policy to penetrate my secret actions ?" exclaimed the countess, in a paroxysm of rage.

" Interest and ambition, signora, have been my principal inducements ; circumstances have made me the master of your actions ; I come not here to listen to your abuse, and scorn the accusations of a murderess. You are in my power, and I shall use the influence I possess, as best befits my inclination and designs."

The coolness with which her vehemence was met rendered the countess nearly frantic ; she stamped furiously upon the floor, and ordered Della Bardia to quit her presence.

" I shall do no such thing," he answered, with the utmost indifference ; " I have too much regard for the honour of your son, the chieftain of our house, to bring on him such a degradation as the exposure of his mother's infamy, and will therefore wait till a short time for reflection has re-

stored your excellenza to reason and composure. You must acknowledge my generous forbearance."

"Insulting ruffian!" ejaculated the countess.

"Let me have no more such language, madam, or I depart, and by to-morrow's sun shall drag you forth to public shame and punishment; you best know how you can confront the testimony of Pietro di Forni."

"Only give me a few days delay," said the countess, "and when Sigismund has insured his prize, I will grant all your demands."

"Really, signora, your spirit seems inclined to yield to circumstances."

"I do not refuse to give Francisca to you," continued the lady; "I want not to withhold her portion; but why should I proclaim her birth, and who will believe the tale?"

"Who shall dare to doubt it?" said Della Bardia; "the evidence to back your assertion is simple and conclusive. You

may make your story as favourable to yourself as circumstances will permit. Don Sigismund has long been accustomed in all things to think and act as you direct. Francisca herself is ignorant of her story, and my end once answered, I require no more. Your excellenza may arrange the details of the discovery even as you will."

"Why, signor, then refuse me the proof of confidence I ask, and still retain Pietro in your power? why should we not act as friends and allies from this time forth?"

"We know each other, lady, somewhat too well; our intercourse, founded on fear on your side, and interest on mine, is likely to have but little confidence on either hand. Gladly I know your excellenza would greet the sight of Della Bardia's lifeless body; I know myself the object of your deadly hatred and incessant dread; and but that my death would spread your secret wide abroad, I had not now the power of making your spirit bend to

my wishes; neither your violence nor your hypocrisy will have weight with me; I equally despise them both. You are an instrument whom I shall use on all occasions as events may make most needful, and at your peril you may disobey me."

The countess sat silent and thoughtful.

"I am come, lady," he continued, "for your final answer, and shall not depart without it; give up Francisca and her dower, and acknowledge her as a daughter of the house from which she is descended."

"For a few days, Accursi, let me delay, and I will act in all things as you wish."

"I am not to be trifled with," he answered; "I grant the respite you require; but at the expiration of a fortnight your engagements must punctually be fulfilled, or my secrecy is no longer secured. I am already weary of delay. Yourself and Adriano have promised that wrongs should meet redress from Luna and his friends. It is now months since the execrated tyrant

me disgraced and plundered from my office. The only tie which has held me from revenge, has been the hope that the insults daily heaped upon our house would give me such a band of auxiliaries, that we might exterminate Perollo's name.

"In this," replied the countess, "you can accuse neither myself nor Geronimo Peralta; we wait but the completion of these nuptials, and with the added strength and wealth of the Solantos, when we shall give way to Sigismund's impatient spirit, you may sate your thirst for vengeance to the full."

"I would have reached the heart of Giacomo through the idol of his love and vanity, the heir of their detested race but events have untowardly prevented me," said Accursi.

"Why not await the hour when our united foes shall overwhelm them?"

"Death," he answered, "however lingering, is a mercy I should not feel disposed to grant to Pandolfina, till I have robbed him of all that made life valuable

my deep hatred is not to be appeased by one act of slaughter. I would tear his heart's affections piecemeal; would butcher daily all he loved; and when I found he had nothing more in the world to love or lose, dismiss him in torments to the grave."

The countess gazed at Della Bardia, but spoke not. Inhuman and malicious as her nature was, she trembled to think to what a wild demoniac spirit her crimes had made her subject.

With a fiend-like laugh he continued—"Your excellenza may, perchance, feel flattered at this confidence, this disclosure of my thoughts and wishes; you dare not, if you would betray them; and the knowledge of my determined nature may be a useful lesson to secure your obedience."

"You have reproached me," replied the countess, "for one act of passion and revenge, have threatened to expose it to the world, and yet, without hesitation, dare avouch such sentiments as these."

"I care not for your crimes," said the

baron, " had they been of ten times deeper dye; but I well know your dread of infamy; I know the terror which you feel at bringing shame upon the house of Luna, and how gladly you would make any sacrifice to save count Sigismund the dire disgrace of having his mother proved a murderess."

The countess trembled, and in a tone subdued by fear, implored him not to raise his voice so high.

" I have found the master-key to all your excellenza's actions," he continued, " and shall use my power with no more pity than poor Francisca yet has found, or the more hapless——"

" Hush! why torture me by these unceasing and useless repetitions? I have for the present engaged to do all that you demand, to forward your views in every way, and only claim a slight return in asking silence."

" I shall now leave you," said Della Bardia, " and shall probably soon visit Santa Caterina, where should I find that

any secret influence has been exerted to instigate an opposition to my wishes in Francisca, your excellenza knows on whom the punishment will fall; she shall be mine, though force should be required to drag her to the altar; and as such a measure would create in her an indelible aversion, all must be done by your command, signora, her kind maternal friend. I shall now give you time to reflect upon the manner in which you choose to make these great discoveries public."

D'Amato rose and wrapped his cloak around him, the lady watched his motions, and anxious to be relieved from the presence of an object so feared and so detested, forbore detaining him by any new remarks; and when he strode from her chamber, she felt her spirit revive within her.

For some time after his departure, she sat silently meditating on the situation to which she was reduced; the tyranny to which her crimes had made her subject, became daily more insupportable. She

had found Accursi rise from one demand to another, and felt that when all that he now required should be granted, it was probable he might still choose to keep her in dependence on his will, and that she should for ever be subject to his insults and extortion; any thing she felt was preferable to this; and she almost resolved to cut him off by some unexpected blow; the threats which he held forth of her secret being published after his death, was the only tie which had hitherto restrained her from following this course; but her spirit during their last conversation had been worked up to a pitch, which overpowered the dictates of prudence, or the remonstrances of fear. Unsupported by his personal weight, the evidence he might leave behind him, she hoped, would be crushed by the influence and power she possessed; and were Della Bardia in his grave, she thought she should not fear the power of any human being.

The object of her alarm being no longer before her, and her fury excited to a de-

gree, which even she had scarcely known, the countess forgot every thing but the insults she had received, and the degradation which she dreaded : at all hazards, she determined on an attempt to free herself from her present slavery ; tools were not wanting, nor was she ignorant where to seek them ; and in defiance of the posthumous vengeance he denounced, the death of Della Bardia was resolved upon.

The meeting between the cavalier Landolini and his daughter was a scene in which all the powers of description must fail, and was witnessed only by the baroness Pandolfina, who, as soon as they had recovered from the first effects of their joy, left them to indulge, without interruption, in the feelings so powerfully excited.

When he had in some degree recovered his equanimity, the cavalier expressed his obligations to don Giacomo, in a tone of warm and manly gratitude ; and Pandolfina obtained from him a promise to remain at the castle for as great a length of

time as the commander-in-chief would permit.

"We may soon," said the chieftain, "expect the return of Gaetano from his chivalrous expedition to the African shores, and intend to join with the family of the baron Solanto in a public festival of thanksgiving for the happiness with which Providence has marked the last few days, in giving freedom to our captive countrymen."

Landolini acquiesced in the opinion of all parties on the subject, and the return of Pignatelli was only wanting to fix the day when the procession should take place. Nor was this long delayed; the short time he had been detained in Tunis, and the favourable passage he had made, both on his voyage thither and on his return, soon restored him to the wishes of his friends.

Two or three days after the arrival of don Vincentio, as the party in Perollo Castle were assembled at their usual amusements, they heard an exclamation

of joy from the children, who were playing in the gallery.

“ I should almost hope that was caused by the return of Gaetano,” said Federico, advancing to the door, which Pignatelli entered at the moment ; his eye caught a view of Landolini, and instantly throwing himself into the arms of Federico, he exclaimed—“ Santa Virgine ! how can I see the unhappy father with such news as I bring !”

“ My dear Gaetano, recover yourself ; donna Marguerita is safe.”

“ No, no ! do not deceive him, Federico ! I saw her lifeless body stretched on the bed of death.”

By this time all the party were assembled round them, and Landolini said—“ My dear young friend, I never can acknowledge, as I ought, this unprecedented kindness ; here is my child ; she too must ever feel your generous exertions in our cause.”

Pignatelli looked up, as if he could scarcely credit what he heard, and saw lean-

ing upon Landolini a beautiful girl, whose countenance shewed, by its deep interest in the scene, that it must be Marguerita. By degrees he recovered his composure, and the remainder of the evening passed with the greatest cheerfulness, the adventures of the young traveller affording infinite amusement to his friends.

Solanto having received information from don Giacomo that all the parties interested were now arrived, mentioned their intention to count Luna, who excused himself from participating in the ceremonies which were to take place upon the day of thanksgiving, on the grounds of his being unable to join in any arrangements which were to take place under the control of Perollo ; but assured the baron, that he most sincerely partook in the general joy of the occasion, leaving it to his friend and adviser, Adriano, to endeavour to break off the growing cordiality between his guest and don Giacomo, taking an opportunity to leave them together, after he had thus made his apologies for

not joining in the procession, which he thought the family might probably expect.

When Sigismund had quitted the room, Peralta observed, that it was rather singular for don Giacomo to make so public parade of the services he considered himself to have rendered to the baron Solanto, which seemed, in fact, to have been entirely the effect of the capricious generosity of the infidel chief.

“ You have till lately, signor,” he said, “ been a stranger to the private character of Perollo, or your great penetration must have discovered the arrogant assumption which, in every instance, he advances to exalt the merit of his trifling civilities; the ostentatious display of his naval command was certainly a fortunate circumstance for your excellenza; but it by no means entitles him to the sort of deference he presumes to declare that he shall expect from you.”

“ And does the baron Pandolfina take

Sigismund would join him ; when he returned, Adriano continued—" I felt assured that when your excellenza knew the insufferable pretensions of don Giacomo, you would instantly renounce all intercourse with him ; high as the name of the baron Solanto stands in the eye^s of Europe, it would be no small triumph to their party, to see him, even as a neutral, amongst them ; but they could not hope that such discrimination would long be deceived by their shallow pretences."

Count Luna entered the apartment.

" I was wrong, signor," said Solanto, advancing towards him, " in the harsh treatment I bestowed somewhat too rashly, I hope, on your vehemence against my friend the baron Pandolfina ; (Adriano looked delighted at the revolution his eloquence had wrought in the opinions of Solanto) I attributed your conduct too much perhaps to injustice and party hatred. You are young, count Luna, and it is one of the misfortunes of youth to be deceived by those they think their

ds ; the lessons of experience, though
ary, are seldom pleasant, particularly
n they expose the fallacy of our hopes,
ie frailty of those affections to which
ave trusted. Connected as I already
with you, my lord, I almost hourly
a deeper interest in every thing which
erns your welfare ; and therefore,
out hesitation, am about to perform a
ssary, though most painful duty, to
se the calumny, the falsehood, the
rincipled character of your kinsman,
baron Adriano."

igismund stood in silent astonishment,
his friend appeared overwhelmed with
usion and disappointment.

"With such an adviser," continued So-
o, " I wonder not at the enmity you
towards the noble Pandolfina, having
self just witnessed his undisguised ma-
ity. I have received, count Luna,
n the hands of don Giacomo Perollo,
obligation which it will never be in
power to repay ; this obligation has
e been increased by the most generous

kindness, manifested in every way which his unbounded liberality could devise, and this insinuating treacherous relative yours has been using all his power to point out the merits of ingratitude, and heaping the most unqualified abuse upon my friend, regardless alike of honour and of truth. The exalted character he thus basely attacked, is far above the malice of such enemies; but yours, my lord, is hourly in danger, while he continues to be acknowledged and received as the friend and intimate of count Luna. I feel myself so deeply insulted, that it is impossible for me to remain longer as an inmate of the same abode; and unless the baron Adriano immediately quits your castle I must remove myself and family."

"Some misunderstanding I fear," said Luna.

"No misunderstanding, signor," interrupted Solanto; "the declarations of the baron Adriano were too clear, his principles too glaringly displayed, to allow of any misconception; and I must agree

repeat that it is impossible for us both to continue your guests." Thus saying, the baron withdrew, leaving Luna and his partisan confounded at his calm, yet decided resolution.

Sigismund regretted the unfortunate discussion, and more especially that his friend's zeal for his service had brought upon him the unpleasant reproaches of the baron.

To his regrets Adriano answered—"For myself, I shall find a time to repay the compliments of this most magnanimous cavalier; my only anxiety is to forward your excellenza's interest. The policy of don Giacomo begins, I find, to work; he trusts, through the influence of this new connexion, to alienate all your former friends, and thus draw you unresistingly into his power. Our best line of conduct appears to me to be, to humour them in all things, till you have secured the lady Costanza. I can withdraw to the house of Calandrino, and, for

the present, let our intercourse be private. Offer no resistance to their party to-morrow; affect a deference to the opinion of the baron, which will, I doubt not, soon produce the effect we wish, and restore us to liberty of action, and the enjoyment of a prompt revenge, in the contemplation of which I shall console myself for the present, under the insult I have just received."

"Your advice, my friend," said Luna, "is always temperate, but it will be difficult for me to follow it; any thing but Costanza would be dearly purchased at such a sacrifice of my feelings; but I will in all things endeavour to follow your directions."

When Solanto and Luna next met, the latter offered some slight excuse for the conduct of Peralta, and informed the baron he had withdrawn from the castle.

Solanto congratulated his young friend on having escaped the snares of a secret foe, thanked him for the moderation he had shewn, and kindly hoped that Cos-

tanza would acknowledge the temper and self-command he had evinced in all which related to the affair. During the rest of the day, Sigismund exerted himself to conceal his real sentiments, and Solanto forbore to recall the subject of his approaching visit to Perollo.

On the evening preceding the festival, Federico had been visiting the abbot of the Dominican convent in the valley Delli Guimari, to whom he had been known from infancy, and was returning alone through the rocky valley towards the private gate of the Casa di Perollo, when his attention was arrested by the clashing of arms, which sounded from the adjoining road, which led in the direction of the baths; and hastening to the spot from whence the noise came, he saw a tall cavalier, with his back against a rock, defending himself from the attack of four men. At the first glance he recognized the same figure he had seen amidst the ruins of Segesta, and who had excited the

alarms of Baptista during great part of their journey from Palermo: though Perollo had heard the atrocious character of the baron Della Bardia, and suspicions were strongly against him that he had intended some mischief to himself by the midnight visit at Castel Vetrano, yet every idea instantly disappeared from the mind of Federico, but that of the disproportionate force by which he was attacked, and the danger to which he was exposed; he flew immediately to his aid, and two of the assailants turning to meet him, gave the barone some respite from his enemies. The men fought bravely, but the coolness of Perollo, and his superior skill in the use of his weapon, in a few moments stretched one of them at his feet, and disarmed the second, who fled from the spot; he then joined in the contest with those who still pressed the barone, by whose hand another of the ruffians fell; and with the aid of Perollo, he succeeded in securing the person of the one who remained, who being armed, and in the powerful grasp of

Della Bardia, earnestly implored forgiveness.

"Who set you on to seek my life?" exclaimed the baron, furiously.

"It was not from the reward," said the man, "but from a wish to serve my chief, count Luna."

"Liar!" cried Della Bardia; "count Luna hired you not to murder his firmest friends."

"Not the count himself," replied the prisoner, "but his vassal Marco, who engaged me to prevent your excellenza from breaking off the marriage of count Luna, by producing the other lady who is in your custody."

"Did no one else engage your services?"

"No; signor Marco, who lies dead before you, was the person who promised me the reward, and told me why your excellenza must be cut off, to ensure the happiness of his master."

"As you hope for mercy," said Della

Bardia, "tell me if the count or his mother knew of the proceeding?"

The assassin swore most solemnly that he had declared all he knew.

"Have you no more to reveal?" said the baron.

"No, signor, as I hope for pardon here and hereafter."

"Then take the punishment you merit," cried Accursi, shortening his sword, and plunging it in the bosom of his victim; "the revenge of Della Bardia knows not mercy or forgiveness."

Federico interposed, but too late.—"Shame!" he exclaimed, indignantly; "shame, signor, on this disgraceful act, to murder your prisoner, thus disarmed and in your power."

"He would have shewn the same compassion to myself," said the baron, and looking earnestly at his preserver, exclaimed—"Perollo's son!"

"Yes, signor, it is the son of don Giacomo Perollo, who has been so fortunate

as to render you assistance, and who laments that it was not in his power to save you from this last act of cruelty and rage."

"Signor Perollo," said Della Bardia, "I have long sought your life; I have vowed the destruction of your family; it is perhaps a fatal act into which you have been betrayed."

"My family and myself," replied Federico, "are under the protection of a Providence, which will defend us, as it has hitherto done, from the snares of those who seek our destruction; and confiding in that support, no Perollo would forfeit its favour by abandoning the direst of his foes to treachery and assassination."

"Then let them seek the shelter of a cloister," replied Accursi, with a sneer, "and they will escape my pursuit. For you, signor, I shall remember your services to-night, and henceforward forego my purposed vengeance; and though I cannot feel towards you any sentiments of

friendship even as the preserver of my life, though the injuries and insults heaped on me by your father are imprinted on my memory in characters which never can be effaced, and shall one day be deeply avenged, yet the fortunate succour I have to-night received from you will be equally indelible."

"I wish not," replied Perollo, with a smile, "to be separated from the danger with which you, signor, seem to threaten my family, and beg that the trifling service I have rendered, may not burthen you with any feelings of gratitude which sit so uncomfortably on your spirit. To the same Providence that watches over my father and my friends, and to the sword I carry, I am willing to trust for protection from the vengeance of the barone della Bardia."

"Your confidence, signor Perollo, might perhaps be convicted of rashness; but from this time forth, I shall never raise my arm against your life: it is in your power to

purchase my farther good opinion, by not immediately promulgating what has passed to all the citizens of Sciacca."

"I have never been wont to boast of common acts of humanity," replied Federico; "and though I shall not pledge myself to secrecy, it is not my intention to make these circumstances public; and as I can be of no farther service, nor wish to prolong this conversation, shall now bid you farewell."

Della Bardia returned his salutation, and they parted.

When Federico reached the Casa di Perollo, he did not for some time mention the affair to any one, and would probably have concealed it altogether, but for the confession of the assassin, that the motive for the attempt was to prevent the production of some lady, who might break off the contract between count Luna and the signora di Solanto. This information had conveyed to his heart the most over-
flowing happiness, and he had soon con-

vinced himself that the lady Lucretia was still alive, and in the custody of Accursi; or that some lady existed, with whom count Luna had formed a precontract of marriage. It was at all events his duty to communicate these tidings to the baron Solanto; but the difficulty consisted in the method of doing it; his own personal interference was rendered impossible by the consciousness of the interest he took in the lady. He was determined not to involve his father in any new contest with the house of Luna, and therefore don Paolo was the only person whom he could commission to give the intelligence to the parties interested.

Federico confided to Gaetano the plan he intended to pursue, and his friend fully approving his intention, he sought his kinsman early in the morning, and laid the whole affair before him. Don Paolo acknowledged the propriety of mentioning the intelligence to Solanto, and undertook to do so, without involving Federico in any way, unless his evidence should be abso-

lutely necessary, which did not appear likely to be the case.

The barone della Bardia, when left by his preserver, instantly took measures to remove the bodies of the three men who had fallen, wishing to prevent any public inquiry into the transaction ; and when he had accomplished his purpose, bent his steps to the Castel di Luna, where he sought the apartment of the countess. The frequency of his private interviews had rendered them no longer a matter of observation to the family, and he made his way unnoticed and unannounced to her presence.

The lady was pacing the room, with marks of evident perturbation and anxiety, when Accursi threw open the door, and stood before her in the archway. She uttered an involuntary scream, and trembled violently.

“ I am, I fear, an unwelcome and unexpected visitor,” he said, in a tone of mothered fury ; “ your excellenza is not

went to be so disturbed, even at the presence of Della Bardia."

"I was thinking upon other subjects," she answered, in a tone of hesitation and confusion.

"Vastly interesting, no doubt, madame. May I be indulged in learning the subject of your meditations? you can have no secrets from so dear and intimate a friend as myself—one whom you so highly value, and so affectionately regard."

The countess looked at him, but unable to stand the searching glance of his dark eye, turned away in terror and confusion.

"Events of strange and unexpected occurrence are daily happening to us all," he continued; "I have just had a friendly interview with young Perollo; to-morrow, perhaps, I may visit at his father's castle."

"Have you again attempted his life?" asked the lady.

"No, signora; nor ever mean it more; I am too deeply indebted to the youth,

ever to raise my hand against him. When in such an enemy one finds a deliverer, one may almost expect to find treachery amongst one's friends, were not the attempt too wild and frantic."

"I have reflected on the subject of Francisca," said the countess, "and will put her into your hands whenever you shall choose to fix the day."

"Indebted, no doubt, entirely to your friendly disposition towards me for this unlooked-for concession, perhaps, signora, I may avail myself of it speedily. Has your excellenza seen the count's faithful vassal, Marco, of late?"

"Marco!" faintly articulated the countess, sinking into her chair.

"Yes, signora, Marco; does the mention of his name excite such strange emotions?"

Della Bardia was now silent, and the pause to the countess was dreadful. She saw that her intentions had failed, and were discovered. Well did she know the vindictive spirit she had provoked, and the

power he had of inflicting upon her whatever punishment he might think proper. She trembled before his inquiring gaze, and knew not how to appease him. Accursi seemed rejoicing in the torment he inflicted, and inclined to prolong it to the utmost.

At length the lady, no longer able to endure the silence, asked when he purposed visiting Santa Caterina?

“As soon as every thing can be prepared at Santo Bartolomeo for the reception of the baroness della Bardia.”

“I will arrange the payment of her dower, as may be most convenient to you,” said the countess, hoping to sooth him.

“It may not be in your power, signora. Your fate is not yet decided.”

Again she trembled and sat silent, not daring to venture on any inquiries, and Accursi, after another pause, said—
“Your intentions against me, signora, have failed, and fortunate it is for you that they have done so; you may still be of use in forwarding my plans, and there-

fore for a time I shall leave your crimes unpunished; but, in return, shall require the most unresisting obedience in all things. I too much despise any attempts against my life to fear them, but again assure you, that you will bring down speedy destruction and disgrace upon the house of Luna, should you succeed, and another trial would carry you a prisoner to Palermo, to answer for the enormities you have committed. It suits my purpose to spare you for the present, but my life shall not be exposed to your treachery, nor the fulfilment of my wishes delayed."

The countess attempted some incoherent defence of herself; but Accursi imperiously commanded her to be silent; and on the morrow to dispatch an order to the abbess of Santa Caterina, that the person of the novice Francisca should be delivered to his care whenever he chose to require it.—"It is not my wish," he added, "to punish the innocent with the guilty, nor to trespass on the obligations which I owe to the chieftain of my family. I shall not

therefore insist on the public recognition of Francisca's rights, till after the union of don Sigismund with the daughter of Solanto, unless compelled by unforeseen circumstances to such a measure."

The countess expressed her thanks for this last assurance, and promised a ready obedience to his wishes. All her endeavours to conciliate were however vain, and Della Bardia quitted her presence with a look of silent contempt, leaving her to the agony of her own reflections, which was considerably increased by the uncertainty she was in, as to the measures the barone might take to visit her offence against himself.

All the friends and adherents of Pandolfina assembled on the day appointed for the thanksgiving of the captives, to attend the procession from the Casa di Perollo to the principal church. The streets were lined by the retainers of don Giomo and his friends, and thronged by crowds of citizens, who extolled, in terms of loud admiration, the conduct of Pe-

rollo, his liberality, and the inflexible justice with which he protected them from the oppression of the nobles.

Don Giacomo, with the baroness Solanto, led the procession, and were immediately followed by the baron, who was accompanied by the prior of San Vito; and the baroness Pandolfina, Landolini, his daughter, and the senior monk of the same convent, succeeded; after whom came Ludovico and the inferior captives, each conducted by some noble connexion of don Giacomo, and a brother of San Vito; and bearing an olive-branch in their hands. It was with regret that Federico resigned the attendance upon Costanza to don Paolo; and, to the consternation of Pignatelli, he found himself obliged to escort the countess Sambuca.

The procession passed in solemn silence through the city. The calm and pious gratitude of the baroness Solanto, the joyous happiness of don Giacomo, the dignity of the baroness Pandolfina, the

military stature and commanding figure of Solanto, with the entranced devotion of Marguerita, formed a contrast the most lively and impressive. Every one seemed to enter into the solemn and grateful nature of the duty in which they were engaged, and the deepest silence sealed the lips of all save one.

“Did you observe, signor Pignatelli,” asked the countess Sambuca, “what a veil the lady Costanza has got? It is the most beautiful thing I ever beheld; I would give the universe for such another. The signora Luchese has one she makes a great parade about, but it really is nothing like this; I hope she will die with vexation at the sight of it.”

“We shall be observed, if we enter into this important discussion at present, signora,” said Gaetano.

“You really are as bad as Sambuca himself; but you need not expect that I shall remain silent during the whole of this tedious ceremony; I want to hear

again the whole account of your Jewish friends, signor; of their beautiful dresses, and divine earrings."

"For the present, signora, I hope you will be contented to attract admiration by the charms of your person, and reserve the display of your animated conversation till our return."

"As you are more civil in your manner of requesting it than my husband, I will try what I can do; but you must remember that I am only a spectator of this ceremony, and have no thanksgiving to offer; and to tell you the truth, signor——"

"Silence, lady, for pity sake!" said Pignatelli. The lady went on unheeding him.

"To tell you the truth, this Serican seems to have been a most elegant-minded man; and I think the signora Landolini might well have been contented to remain with him. For my own part, I was glad enough when I got away from my convent, and from the authority of my father:

I had expected," she added, with a whine of lamentation, "to find myself my own mistress when I married; and had I met with so superior a creature as this bassa, I am sure I should not have wished to be delivered from him."

Her companion saw that his endeavours to keep her silent were useless, and therefore gave way to her garrulity, and the countess chattered on incessantly till they arrived at the church, where being placed near the count, she was restrained from disturbing the solemn proceedings.

Te Deum was celebrated with all the pomp and magnificence usual on such occasions, and liberal offerings made by Solanto and Perollo; the latter insisting on his right, as temporary guardian of Marguerita, to present the acknowledgment of her gratitude to the treasury of the church; don Vincentio made some resistance, but the generous perseverance of Pandolfina was irresistible.

During the interval between the return of the party from the church, and their

reassembling at the banquet, don Giacomo accompanied Solanto over the castle, to see the armoury, and various improvements which had been made to the strength and ornament of the building.

“ I know not,” said Solanto, “ a more delightful residence than Sciacca, were it not for the unfortunate feud between your house, don Giacomo, and the family of Luna; but we shall, I hope, one day see this discord at an end.”

“ It must be by the extinction of one of our families,” said Pandolfina. “ Don Sigismund has resisted every attempt towards a union with such pertinacity, and resents so keenly even offences which on our parts are not intended, that it is impossible for me to feel any thing but pity for his infatuation, and dislike for the ill conduct it produces.”

“ I have good cause,” answered Solanto, “ to believe that the fault rests not in don Sigismund himself; he is a hot-headed and impetuous young man, and has been ill-advised by those whom he considered as

his friends. Your conduct has been misrepresented, and he has been prompted to resent injuries and insults which existed only in the malignant imagination of those who find it expedient to irritate the ill-will between you. As I may rely on the generosity you have manifested, I shall not despair of restoring him to reason and temper."

Don Giacomo smiled.—"Your excellenza will achieve a marvel in reconciling the feuds of Luna and Perollo. For myself, I am willing to join in amity with count Luna, whenever he feels inclined to accept my friendship; but there are members of his family, who never will forgive my offences towards them. Della Bardia has too good a memory to forget my lecture on peculation; the baron Adriano will not lose sight of the imprisonment which his violation of the laws brought upon him; and the houses of Imbiagnia, Calandrino, and Infontanetta, have lost too much by the restriction of their oppressions
the lower class of citizens, to make

them sincere advocates for peace and concord."

"Much perhaps might be done," observed Solanto, "by detaching don Sigismund from his party, and the new influence we may perhaps acquire over him will not be useless."

"I may be imprudent, perhaps impertinent," said don Paolo, who was the only person now in company with the two gentlemen; "but I hope that my intentions will plead for me, when I say, that if your excellenza values the peace and happiness of donna Costanza, as highly as it is natural you should, you will avoid the fulfilment of any engagement for the present."

Solanto looked with surprise at this address. Don Paolo had taken no part in the previous conversation, and his present interference excited the astonishment both of the baron and don Giacomo.

"I may find no other opportunity so favourable," continued don Paolo, "to speak without observation, and I have

motives which urge me strongly to this warning. Baron Solanto," he added, in an impressive tone, "I speak not as an enemy to the house of Luna; the count possesses many amiable qualities, and I am most willing to allow them; I accuse no one, but there are mysterious circumstances attached to the party, which require explanation, and without it, may for ever destroy the happiness of your family; I ask, only for your own sake, that you will not be precipitate, that you will avoid all promises for a time, and carefully observe the inmates of Luna Castle. Be assured this is not the insidious jealousy of hereditary hatred; doubt me if you will, but attend to my request; I have motives the most powerful for this conduct, but wish not at present to declare them, and am unable to afford you any positive proofs of the events to which I allude."

"From any other than my kinsman, Paolo," said don Giacomo, "I should have heeded at such a warning, or treated it one amongst the numerous inventions

of our citizens to raise suspicions of the house of Luna; but ignorant as I am of his intentions, I strongly advise your excellenza to listen to his request."

"I shall without hesitation follow your directions, signor," said the baron; "the character of don Paolo makes his advice at all times valuable, and I fully rely on his honour and discretion."

"Flattered as I feel by this confidence, signor," said don Paolo, "I can only at present say, I shall endeavour to deserve it, and that nothing but imperious circumstances should induce me to act in so mysterious and secret a manner."

The conversation was interrupted by the approach of other persons, and no more passed upon the subject.

In the amusements of Perollo Castle, Costanza soon forgot the unpleasant reflections which the gloom of count Luna's abode never failed to inspire. Pignatelli, to keep the stricter watch over Federico, and to prevent the particularity of his at-

tentions being observed, had attached himself to her, and listened with infinite amusement to the vivacity of her conversation, till the approach of the countess Sambuca stopped her.

“ Well, signor Pignatelli,” she began, “ I expect, in return for your uncivil treatment this morning, you will now introduce me to the honour of an acquaintance with the signora di Solanto.”

Gaetano obeyed, and the countess poured forth an almost interminable string of compliments, questions, and information, on various subjects, to which Costanza was unable to reply, from astonishment at her address.

“ How rejoiced I should be,” said the countess, “ was there any prospect of our forming a mutual friendship ! but I understand, signora, you are destined to that dreadful count Luna. It really makes me tremble to think how soon you may be spirited away by the old countess ; I am amazed you don’t run off, throw yourself o a convent, or——”

“ Indeed,” interrupted Costanza, “ your compassion, signora, is wasted on a bad subject ; if I am hereafter to be the wife of don Sigismund, your character of him is calculated to excite fearful anticipations ; but I am under no alarm, nor would my father force me to any dreadful alternative.”

“ Well, he must be a great delight, my dear ; as for myself, I have been the most unfortunate creature on earth in my relatives, and cannot but wish that you were destined to some more humanized partner.”

Costanza turned to speak to some one near her, and the countess directed her conversation to Pignatelli, but in a voice loud enough to be heard by both the parties, of whom she was speaking—“ There is my cousin Federico ; he is, I believe, an excellent young man, though he avoids me so carefully, that I have seldom an opportunity of talking with him ; he would make a much better husband for the sig-

nora di Solanto, and it is evident by his looks that he very much admires her; I wish he would try and rescue her from her inauspicious fate."

"The count Sambuca appears desirous to engage your attention, signora," said Gaetano, anxious to stop the conversation.

"Why need you heed him?" replied the countess, peevishly; "I never do, unless it is impossible to help it."

Costanza, covered with blushes and confusion, sought her mother, and was some time before she could recover from the agitation into which the unexpected attack had thrown her. The confusion of Federico, which she had a glimpse of, and his previous manner, had awakened strong suspicions in her mind of his secret attachment; and so fully was she employed in reflecting on the subject, that for a time she scarcely heard the conversation which don Paolo addressed to her; but at length he succeeded in gaining her attention, and

she was infinitely charmed by his manners and observations.

During the evening, the cavalier Landolini complained of being languid and ill, and withdrew some time before the rest of the party.

Varied were the feelings and reflections, excited by the occurrences of the day, which, when the hour of separation came, possessed the minds of those who had been engaged in the busy scene. The baron Solanto pondered with some anxiety upon the warning he had received from don Paolo. Costanza rejoiced at escaping from observation, and at being enabled to consider, without interruption, the circumstances in which she was involved. Every hour brought with it additional repugnance to fulfilling her engagement with count Luna, and with dismay she reflected on the observations of the countess Sambuca, who could scarcely be suspected of having an opinion of her own, and spoke of don Sigismund as one whose bad qualities were notorious. The

interest she held in the heart of Federico became daily more apparent, and she thought at times that she could not, and that she ought not, to marry Luna ; but knew no sufficient reason to give to her father or to the world, for breaking an engagement she at first had sanctioned ; nor did she feel satisfied with herself for wishing it.

Whilst Costanza was thus uneasy at her future prospects, Federico was little less so ; he had forfeited the resolutions he had made, and found that in the presence of the signora di Solanto his self-command constantly deserted him ; he could not hope that his conduct and attentions had escaped the eye of his mother ; for even the countess Sambuca appeared to have remarked them, and he dreaded the remonstrances he felt he had deserved.

But none of the party who had met at the Casa di Perollo were suffering like Landolini and his child. The former had retired to bed feverish and languid, with increasing symptoms of severe illness ; the

affectionate alarm of Marguerita was excited, and she sat by his couch, promising that every half-hour should be the last of her vigil; her father had declined the attendance of any of the domestics, hoping he should sleep and be refreshed; and after they had retired to rest, Marguerita was unwilling to summon any one, nor could she quit her father, who before morning felt so ill, that he did not even desire her absence; and when Gaetano, at an early hour, came to inquire how his old friend had rested, he found Marguerita pale and ill from watching, but still more so from anxiety and alarm, and Landolini very seriously indisposed.

END OF VOL. II.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

PRINTED FOR

A. K. NEWMAN & CO.

AT THE

Minerva Press,

LEADENHALL-STREET, LONDON.

	£	s.	d.
Hypocrite, or the Modern Janus, 5 vols	1	5	0
The Wife, by Mrs. Edgeworth, 3 vols	0	15	0
All Sorts of Lovers, or Indiscretion, Truth, and Perfidy, by Henry Summerset, Author of the Mad Man of the Mountains, &c. 3 vols	0	15	0
Married Life, or Faults on all Sides, by Miss Howard, 5 vols.....	1	5	0
Bath and London, or Scenes in each, 4 vols.....	1	1	0
The Schoolmistress, by Mrs. Hunter, of Norwich, Au- thor of Letitia, Lady Maclairn, &c. 2 vols.....	0	8	0
Eva of Cambria, by Emma de Lisle, 3 vols.....	0	15	0
Stratagems Defeated, by Gabrielli, 3 vols.....	1	4	0
Soldier of Pennaflor, 5 vols.....	1	10	0
The Miseries of an Heiress, by A. F. Holstein, 4 vols	1	2	0
Di Montranzo, or the Novice of Corpus Domini, by Louisa Sidney Stanhope, 4 vols	1	1	0
The Blind Beggar, or the Fountain of St. Catherine, by the Author of Julien, or My Father's House, &c. 4 vols.	1	2	0
Modern Times, or the World we Live in, a Post- humous Novel, by Mrs. Helme, 2d edition, 3 vols.	0	15	0
Strathbogie, or the Recluse of Glenmorris, by Alicia McGennis, 5 vols.	1	7	6
Life of Baron Trenck, a new edition, by Thomas Hol- croft, 3 vols.	0	16	6

1

JK





